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Note.—By the courteous permission of their respective authors and publishers, the following authorities have been consulted in the production of the sketch-maps and battle-plans given in the present volume. For the maps of Marlborough's campaigns, North America, and India, and the plans of Blenheim, Ramillies, Quebec, and Plassey, the maps and plans in the Hon. J. W. Fortescue's "History of the British Army," published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. For the plans of the Saints, the Nile, and Copenhagen, Captain Mahan's "Influence of Sea Power upon History" and "Life of Nelson," published by Messrs. Sampson Low, & Co., of London, and Messrs. Little, Brown, & Co., of Boston. Captain Mahan's plan of the Attack at Trafalgar has also been consulted for the plan at page 241 below. For the sketch-map of South Africa, the map of that country in "Poole's Historical Atlas," published by the Oxford Clarendon Press. Messrs. Longmans' "Public Schools Historical Atlas" has also been consulted throughout, more especially for the plans of Blenheim and Ramillies, and the maps of Marlborough's Campaigns and North America.

TABLE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Date.	Colony or Possession.	Method of Acquisition.
1583–1623	Newfoundland and Labrador	Settlement.
1588–1664	The Gambia	,,
1609–1612	The Bermudas	,,
1618–1872	The Gold Coast	Settlement and Cession.
1623–1628	St. Christopher (part) and Nevis	Settlement.
1625	Barbados	,,
1630–1742	British Honduras	Settlement and Cession.
1632	Antigua	Settlement.
1632	Montserrat	,,
1639	Madras	,,
1650	Anguilla	,,
1651	St. Helena	Occupation.
1655	Jamaica	Conquest.
1661–1662	Barbuda	Settlement.
1661–1662	Redonda	,,
1661	Bombay	Cession.
1672	Virgin Islands	Conquest.
1696	Calcutta	Settlement.
1713	Nova Scotia	Peace of Utrecht.
1713	Gibraltar	,, ,,
1713	St. Christopher (rest of)	,, ,,
1757–1765	Bengal	Conquest and Treaty.
1757–1765	Orissa	,, ,,
1757–1765	Behar	,, ,,
1758–1766	Deccan	Conquest and Cession.
1758–1766	Northern Circars	,, ,,
1763	Canada	Peace of Paris.
1763	Grenada and the Grenadines	,, ,,
1763	Tobago	,, ,,
1763	Dominica	,, ,,
1763	St. Vincent	,, ,,
1775	Salsette	Conquest and Cession.
1775	Bassein	,, ,,
1775	Benares	Cession.
1780	Baroda	Protectorate.
1783	The Bahamas	Peace of Versailles.
1783	Turks and Caicos Islands	,, ,,
1786–1824	Straits Settlements	Cession.
1788 (1896)	Sierra Leone	Cession (Protectorate).
1788	Guntoor	Cession.
1788	New South Wales	Settlement.
1792	Dindigul	Conquest and Cession.
1792	Baramahal	,, ,,

DATE.	COLONY OR POSSESSION.	METHOD OF ACQUISITION.
1792	Malabar	Conquest and Cession.
1792	Calicut	,, ,,
1798	Nyzam's Dominions	Protectorate.
1799	Coimbatore	Annexation.
1799	Canara	,,
1800–1801	The Carnatic	Cession.
1800–1801	Tanjore	,,
1800	Haidarabad	Protectorate.
1801–1802	North-West Provinces	Cession, Conquest, and Annexation.
1802	Trinidad	Peace of Amiens.
1802	Ceylon	,, ,,
1803	Tasmania	Settlement.
1803	Part of Mahratta Territories	Conquest.
1805	Travancore	Protectorate.
1814	Cape Colony	Peace of Paris.
1814	Malta	,, ,,
1814	Mauritius	,, ,,
1814	British Guiana	,, ,,
1814	St. Lucia	,, ,,
1814	Seychelles	,, ,,
1815	Ascension	Occupation.
1816	Tristan da Cunha	,,
1816	Nepal	Conquest and Protectorate.
1818	Further Mahratta Territories	,, ,,
1818	Rajputana	Protectorate.
1818	Central India	,,
1824	Queensland	Settlement.
1826	Western Australia	,,
1826	Assam	Conquest.
1826	Arakan	,,
1826	Tenasserim	,,
1830	Mysore	Protectorate.
1832	Falkland Islands	Occupation.
1832	South Georgia	,,
1834	Coorg	Annexation.
1834	Victoria	Settlement.
1836	South Australia	,,
1839	Aden	Cession.
1840	New Zealand	Cession and Settlement.
1841	Hong Kong	Cession.
1842 (1897)	Natal (Zululand, Tongaland, Pondoland)	Occupation.
1843	Sindh	Conquest.
1843	Gwalior	,,
1846	Cashmere	Protectorate.
1846	Sikh Territories south of Sutlej	Conquest and Annexation.
1846	Labuan	Cession.
1849	The Punjaub	Conquest.
1849	Sattara	Annexation.

DATE.	COLONY OR POSSESSION.	METHOD OF ACQUISITION.
1849	Sumbulpore	Annexation.
1852	Pegu	Conquest.
1852–1897	Northern Nigeria	Settlement and Conquest.
1853	Jhansi	Annexation.
1853	Nagpore	,,
1853	Berar	Cession.
1856	Oude	Annexation.
1857	Perim	Occupation.
1861	Lagos	Cession.
1864	Bhutan Dwars	Conquest.
1867	Bahrein Islands	Protectorate.
1868–1884	Basutoland	,,
1871	Griqualand West	Occupation.
1874	Fiji	Cession.
1874	Malay States	Protectorate.
1876	Baluchistan	Treaty.
1878	Cyprus	Occupation under Treaty.
1878	Walfish Bay	Occupation.
1880	Afghan Territories	Conquest and Annexation.
1882	Egypt	Occupation.
1884–1888	British New Guinea	Protectorate and Annexation.
1884	Somaliland	Protectorate.
1885	Southern Nigeria	,,
1885	Further Burmese Territories	Conquest and Annexation.
1885–1891	Bechuanaland	Protectorate.
1888	North Borneo	,,
1888	Sarawak	,,
1888	Socotra	,,
1888	Brunei	,,
1889	Sikkim	,,
1889–1891	British Central Africa	,,
1889	British South Africa	Occupation.
1889	Rhodesia	,,
1890	Zanzibar	Protectorate.
1893–1895	Chitral and N. Frontier Districts	,,
1893–1900	Western Pacific	,,
1894	Uganda	,,
1895	British East Africa	,,
1898	Weihaiwei	Lease.
1898	Kowloon	,,
1900	Orange River Colony	Conquest and Annexation.
1900	Transvaal	,, ,,
1901	Ashanti	,, ,,

The area of the British Empire is approximately 11,400,000 square miles, slightly exceeding one-fifth of the earth's surface.

Its population is approximately 410,000,000, slightly exceeding one-fifth of the inhabitants of the globe.

Its public revenue is approximately £400,000,000.

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War with Spain =
,, Holland =
,, France =

1558. Accession of Elizabeth.
1559. Admiralty made a State Department. Cateau-Cambresis.
1560.
1561.
1562. Hawkins's first voyage. Havre.
1563. Peace of Amboise. Loss of Havre.
1564. Hawkins's second voyage. Peace of Troies.
1565.
1566.
1567. Hawkins's third voyage.
1568. San Juan de Ulua.
1569. Jarnac and Moncontour.
1570. Bull of deposition against Elizabeth.
1571. Drake in the West Indies. Ridolfi Plot.
1572. Drake on the Spanish Main. Lepanto.
1573. Drake on the Spanish Main.
1574.
1575. Hawkins Treasurer of Navy. Gilbert's "Discourse."
1576. Frobisher and the North-West Passage.
1577–1580. Drake's voyage round the world.
1581. Levant Company formed.
1582.
1583. Gilbert in Newfoundland. Throckmorton's Plot.
1584. Raleigh's Charter.
1585. Drake's West Indian expedition. Virginian settlement.
1586. Drake's West Indian expedition. Babington's Plot.
1587. Drake at Cadiz. Mary Queen of Scots executed.
1588. The Armada.
1589. Corunna and Vigo sacked.
1590. Drake in Portugal.
1591. Grenville at the Azores.
1592.
1593.
1594. Lancaster's voyage.
1595. Expedition against West Indies. Raleigh in Guiana.
1596. Expeditions against West Indies and Cadiz.
1597. Expedition against the Azores.
1598. Death of Philip II. Edict of Nantes.
1599. O'Neill's Rebellion.

1600. East India Company incorporated.
1601, 1602. East India Company's first voyage.
1603. Death of Elizabeth.
1604.
1605. Gunpowder Plot.
1606. Gorges's Charter.
1607. Jamestown founded.
1608. English envoy visits Moghul.
1609. Bermudas settled.
1610.
1611.
1612. Surat.
1613.
1614.
1615. New Hampshire and Maine settled.
1616.
1617.
1618. Raleigh executed. Thirty Years' War begins.
1619. Virginian Charter.
1620. *Mayflower* sails.
1621.
1622.
1623. Amboyna. St. Kitts and Leeward Islands settled.
1624.
1625. Death of James I. Virginian Charter. Barbados settled.
1626.
1627. La Rochelle.
1628. Petition of Right.
1629. Massachusetts settled.
1630. British Honduras settled.
1631.
1632. Peace of St. Germains. Maryland settled.
1633. Connecticut settled.
1634.
1635.
1636. Rhode Island settled.
1637.
1638. Windward Islands settled.
1639. Madras purchased.
1640. Long Parliament meets.
1641. Strafford executed.
1642. English Civil War: Edgehill. Tasman's voyage.
1643. Newbury. Chalgrove.
1644. Marston Moor. Lostwithiel.
1645. Naseby. Philiphaugh.
1646. Bahamas settlement.
1647.
1648. Peace of Westphalia.
1649. Execution of Charles I. Drogheda.
1650. Dunbar.
1651. Worcester. Navigation Act.
1652. Kentish Knock. Dungeness.
1653. The Gabbard.
1654.

1655. Conquest of Jamaica.
1656.
1657. Santa Cruz.
1658. Death of Oliver Cromwell.
1659. Peace of the Pyrenees.
1660. Restoration of Charles II. Navigation Act.
1661. Bombay acquired.
1662.
1663. Carolina founded.
1664.
1665. Conquest of New York. Battle of Lowestoft.
1666.
1667. Treaty of Breda.
1668. Triple Alliance. Child's "Discourse."
1669.
1670. Treaties of Dover and Madrid.
1671. Hudson Bay Company's first "voyage."
1672. Virgin Islands conquered. Southwold Bay.
1673.
1674. Peace of Westminster.
1675.
1676.
1677. William of Orange marries Mary Stuart.
1678. Peace of Nimeguen.
1679. Popish Plot.
1680.
1681. Pennsylvania Charter.
1682. Rye-House Plot.
1683.
1684.
1685. Death of Charles II. Sedgemoor.
1686. League of Augsburg formed.
1687.
1688. English Revolution. War of the League of Augsburg.
1689. Killiecrankie.
1690. Battles of the Boyne and Beachy Head. Fort St. David built.
1691.
1692. La Hogue. Steinkirk.
1693. Landen.
1694. Attack on Brest.
1695. Capture of Namur. Darien scheme.
1696. Calcutta founded.
1697. Peace of Ryswick.
1698. First Partition of Spain.
1699. Second Partition of Spain.
1700. Death of Charles II. of Spain.
1701. Death of James II. Grand Alliance.
1702. Death of William III. Spanish Succession War.
1703. Methuen Treaty.
1704. Blenheim. Capture of Gibraltar.
1705. Peterborough captures Barcelona.
1706. Ramillies.
1707. Almanza. Union with Scotland.
1708. Oudenarde.
1709. Malplaquet.

1710. Brihuega and Villa Viciosa.
1711. Marlborough superseded.
1712. Denain.
1713. Peace of Utrecht. Assiento Treaty.
1714. Death of Anne.
1715. Death of Louis XIV. Jacobite Rebellion.
1716.
1717. Triple Alliance.
1718. Cape Passaro.
1719.
1720.
1721. South Sea Bubble.
1722. Ostend Company founded.
1723.
1724. Pragmatic Sanction.
1725. League of Hanover.
1726.
1727. Death of George I.
1728.
1729. Treaty of Seville.
1730.
1731.
1732. Georgia Charter.
1733. First Family Compact.
1734.
1735.
1736.
1737.
1738.
1739. "Captain Jenkins's ear."
1740. Austrian Succession War.
1741. Cartagena.
1742. Anson's voyage.
1743. Dettingen.
1744. Frederick the Great joins France.
1745. Fontenoy. Jacobite Rebellion.
1746. Louisburg. Loss of Madras. Culloden.
1747. Lawfeldt.
1748. Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
1749.
1750.
1751. Arcot.
1752. Reform of the Calendar.
1753. French activity on the Ohio.
1754. Washington and the French.
1755. Braddock's disaster.
1756. Seven Years' War.
1757. Pitt takes office. Plassey. Rossbach. Leuthen.
1758. Louisburg. Ticonderoga. Condore.
1759. Quebec. Quiberon. Masulipatam. Minden.
1760. Conquest of Canada. Wandewash. Death of George II.
1761. Resignation of Pitt.
1762. Capture of Havannah.
1763. Peace of Paris. Oondwa Nullah.
1764. Grenville and the Acts of Trade. Buxar.

1765. Stamp Act passed.
1766. Stamp Act repealed.
1767. Townshend's Tea Tax.
1768.
1769.
1770. "Boston massacre." Captain Cook in Australia.
1771.
1772.
1773. American tea riots. Regulating Act, India.
1774. Quebec Act. Rohilla War.
1775. Lexington. Bunker's Hill.
1776. American Declaration of Independence.
1777. Brandy-Wine Creek. Saratoga.
1778. France joins the Americans. Mahratta War.
1779. Spain joins the Americans.
1780. Camden. Dutch War. Invasion of the Carnatic.
1781. Cowpens. Guildford Court-house. Yorktown. Porto Novo.
1782. The Saints.
1783. Peace of Versailles.
1784. William Pitt the younger takes office. India Act.
1785.
1786. Straits Settlements ceded.
1787.
1788. Botany Bay settlement.
1789. French Revolution begins.
1790. Second Mysore War.
1791. Canada Act.
1792. End of Mysore War.
1793. Execution of Louis XVI.
1794. Battle of the First of June.
1795. British occupy the Cape and Ceylon.
1796. Lodi. Arcola.
1797. Peace of Campo Formio. Cape St. Vincent. Camperdown.
1798. Battle of the Nile.
1799. Fall of Tippoo Sahib.
1800. Marengo. Act of Union (Ireland). Treaty with Nizam.
1801. Peace of Lunéville. Copenhagen.
1802. Peace of Amiens.

1803. Laswari. Assaye. Argaum.
1804. War with Holkar.
1805. Trafalgar. Ulm. Austerlitz.
1806. British again occupy the Cape. Jena.
1807. Treaty of Tilsit. Berlin Decrees.
1808. Baylen. Vimiero.
1809. Corunna. Talavera. Walcheren. Wagram.
1810. Busaco. Torres Vedras.
1811. Fuentes d'Onoro. Albuera.
1812. American War. Borodino. Cuidad Rodrigo. Badajos. Salamanca.
1813. Vittoria. Leipzig.
1814. Treaty of Paris. Bladensburg. Nepal War.

1815. New Orleans. Waterloo.

INTRODUCTION

The process by which an island—or, to be more precise, part of an island, and that by no means the largest in the world—grew into the British Empire was not rapid; nor did it start from a sudden impulse. It has gone on through several generations; and it really began only when the British Islands had been combined into a single state. The latter condition has not always been dwelled upon sufficiently. It is an exaggeration to date our Imperial structure from the days of Queen Elizabeth. In those days Englishmen paved the way for English colonial expansion and showed the lines along which it could be conducted; but the practical commencement of the operation itself did not occur until the insular kingdoms in the North-Eastern Atlantic had come under the rule of a single sovereign. Jealousies between the different nationalities, no doubt, continued to exist for a considerable time; but gradually and surely each took its part in the great work. If we survey the last three centuries of our history, we must see that, had our forefathers been experts in philosophical politics, they could not have devised, deliberately and in the study, methods of creating a great Oceanic and Colonial Empire more perfect than those which in fact were adopted. The characteristics of each of the nationalities inhabiting these islands were utilised. We may take it that three different national groups, if not distinct nationalities, participated in the creation. These were the English, the Keltic, and the mixture of the two. Had any of these

been wanting, the thing would have fallen to pieces like a child's puzzle whilst being put together. Thus the British Empire is not an English, but a truly British, work. Throughout the story of its establishment some representative of each of the above groups appears from time to time as a dominating force. Look at the index of an account of the period of expansion, and see how frequently among the names of the prominent actors you meet those of English, Irish, Scottish Highland, Welsh, Lowland Scottish, and Anglo- or Scoto-Irish families.

The work to be done was partly maritime, partly military, partly commercial, partly political and organising. Each national group consequently found ready to its hand something that it had proved itself especially capable of doing. The most scientific arrangement could not have utilised available forces more effectually. The characteristics of one part not only supplemented, they also modified or restrained those of the others. It is owing to this that the British is the most pacific, and at the same time the most pugnacious, of nations. This may look like a contradiction; but it is not. No people in the world is more averse to war; none will fight more vehemently when war has been forced upon it. Shakespeare's genius enabled him to divine what was coming. The words that he puts into Polonius's mouth—hackneyed as they have become—are so apposite as to permit a reference to them, if not complete quotation. Avoiding entrance to a quarrel, but, when involved in one, making the opponent sorry that he had begun it, long served as a rule for, and exactly described the behaviour of, the British empire-builder. We began with efforts at peaceful intercourse; and, where they succeeded, peace was maintained. In most parts of the world fighting followed; generally in spite of our wishes to avoid it. The soldier was commonly the last man to appear on the soil of a new British dependency. Acquisition of islands or quasi-

insular naval bases like Gibraltar and, at the time of its acquisition, Simon's Bay were largely due to strategic considerations, and did not as a rule lead to extensive settlement, or large transfers of British population.

And yet, as the book to which this is an Introduction shows, there was a great deal of fighting whilst the British Empire was being built up. It is well known that we owe the establishment and also the maintenance of that Empire to our naval pre-eminence. Few Britons now fail to understand that either the establishment or the preservation would be impossible without the pre-eminence. What is much less generally perceived is that military operations on shore were often found necessary for the acquisition, and perhaps even more often for the retention, of territory that became, and still is, British. It is in order to give to this fact its due prominence that many pages of this book are filled with accounts of military operations. Clive and Wolfe, it is true, could not have done what they did had there been no navy to prepare the way for them and support them; but it is equally true that Clive and Wolfe had a notable share in making the British Empire as we now see it. Just as notable, of course, was the share of Saunders and Watson, who lacked a sacred bard to sing their exploits; but this in no way diminishes the merit of their soldier brothers-in-arms.

Land campaigns fall more within the scope of a book of this kind than do naval campaigns, and for a reason which is worth mention. Belligerent operations on the sea are frequently carried on at a distance from the territory to be defended or assailed. The defence of India on a well-known occasion was conducted in the Mediterranean. Hawke frustrated the invasion of England, not in English, but in French, waters. On land it is more common for operations to go on nearer the objective. To explain why this should be would need a long statement, one moreover of the special kind that would be likely only to interest and

be of use to students of strategy. Such a statement would be out of place in a work like this; whereas, if it were only for their local interest, accounts, occasionally in some detail, of campaigns on shore have to be included in it. Great sea-fights are, of course, not excluded; but only those the effect of which on the course of colonial expansion was manifestly direct, call for any lengthy description.

The British Empire is, of course, the gift of sea-power, but of sea-power understood in a wide sense. Without great maritime activity and naval pre-eminence, if not predominance, we could not have got a footing in the territories which compose it. In many cases that footing could not have been confirmed and retained without military, as distinguished from naval, effort. The Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand are exceptions—great and important exceptions, it is true—to the ordinary rule. In them flourishing British communities established themselves without military aid, though in New Zealand the time did come when the services of the soldier were more immediately needful than those of the sailor. Elsewhere fighting on shore was a frequent episode in the local history. Closely examined, it will be found to verify the view that our intentions in seeking for trans-marine expansion were pacific. What we wanted were the advancement of commerce and the possibility of establishing quiet settlements. Other nations tried to stop these by the show, or the actual use, of force. Strategic arrangements were devised to keep us from the fur-producing area of North and West America; or to enclose us between the Atlantic Ocean and the country verging on the Mississippi Valley; or to confine us to a few coast districts in India. Then our pugnacity asserted itself. Nothing more conclusively proves the originally pacific intention of British colonisation than Vergennes' well-founded conviction that the expulsion of the French from

North America would be the prelude to the independence of the Colonies there. It shows that what had been got rid of was a force deliberately utilised to check our expansion.

The foregoing must be taken into account if we are to understand the process by which the Island became the Empire. Unless we do take it into account, the whole story will be but a succession of episodes more or less loosely connected together, instead of a coherent whole. It is useful to know how the Empire was built up, because the knowledge will help us to perceive the way in which it can be preserved and defended. British subjects hear often and read often of the Empire to which they belong, and which their fathers founded. It should be interesting to them to peruse the modest presentation of the history of the great creation that will be found in the book hereby introduced. It makes no pretence to deep original research nor historical completeness. All that its author claims for it is that it be regarded as an accurate compilation from recognised authorities, put together—he hopes—in such a manner that those who might be deterred by the sight of more imposing volumes may find in it most of the information they want; and, in not a few cases, be induced to proceed to the study of those authoritative works to which reference is frequently made in the ensuing pages.

CYPRIAN A. G. BRIDGE.

FROM ISLAND TO EMPIRE

CHAPTER I

THE ELIZABETHAN SEAMEN AND THE STRUGGLE WITH SPAIN

Introductory—The political situation in 1558—The English seamen and the Spanish claims—John Hawkins—His first voyage—His second voyage—His third voyage—San Juan de Ulua—Francis Drake—Drake on the Spanish Main—He sails for the Pacific—Execution of Doughty—The Straits of Magellan—On the Pacific coast—Capture of the *Spitfire*—The homeward voyage—Strained relations with Spain—Drake in the West Indies—The Armada is planned—Drake's attack on Cadiz—England prepares for the Armada—The Armada sighted—The fight in the Channel—The Council of War off Calais—The battle of Gravelines—The fate of the Armada—Services of the Elizabethan seamen.

A DISTINGUISHED historian is reported to have said that British greatness is based upon the turnip and the herring. He may seem to have invented a lofty destiny for those simple articles of agricultural and domestic use; but his saying is none the less true. In the middle ages the wealth of England was purely agricultural, England being the greatest producer of sheep, and hence the greatest exporter of wool; and the turnip, by feeding the sheep that grew the wool,[1] formed the basis of English commercial prosperity. The influence

[1] The historian's epigram is open to the objection that the introduction of the turnip for sheep-farming purposes is a comparatively recent innovation.

of the herring was even more important. It was something more than a rare visitor at an occasional breakfast-table in an age when simplicity of life revealed itself in the simplicity of the table, and when the rules of the Church prescribed the frequent eating of fish. Instead of growing turnips the sea-board population went in quest of the herring; and occupying their business in great waters, they came to regard the sea as their own peculiar element, and thereby laid the foundations of our maritime greatness.

A more conspicuous place among the causes which have contributed to our national development is usually assigned to the Reformation; but it may be difficult to explain to what causes the Reformation in England may itself have been due, if it was that movement which produced the English love of independence and of freedom, and the English intolerance of interference, whether by strangers in our domestic, or by foreigners in our national, concerns. That these features of the English national character should be plainly discernible in our pre-Reformation history will be a phenomenon still less easy to explain. It was not the spirit of the Reformation which, in the four preceding centuries, had curbed the ambition of despotic kings, had laid the foundation of political freedom, and had sent forth the English yeomen to be the scourge and terror of European chivalry; nor was it that spirit which had extorted the Great Charter from the only monarch who truckled to the Pope, which had resisted the encroachments of the Pope himself, and in such statutes as those of Præmunire and Provisors had invented contrivances for the discomfiture of his servants. But whilst the religious upheaval pre-supposes the existence of certain qualities in the national character, an unimpassioned observer might admit that the weapons with which the religious victory was won came out the brighter from the contest, and that it was in the fire of a new-born passion that England was launched against

Spain in the struggle "which established the basis of England's empire."

England started late upon her Imperial career. Before the accession of Henry VII. her strength had been frittered away, first, in repeated endeavours to gratify the grotesque dynastic ambitions of her rulers, then in the bloody contests of Lancaster and York; and in a series of continental campaigns, or beneath the badges of the rival Roses, the adventurous spirits of the nation had found an outlet for their energies. A troubled period followed, of religious and political unrest and sometimes of foreign war; but the prosperity of the country advanced by rapid strides, and new circumstances arose which generated new forces. A great increase in sheep-farming, and the consequent neglect of all other agricultural pursuits,[1] rapidly depleted the country districts to the increase of population in the commercial and maritime centres; and an important section of the people, growing in wealth and numbers and quickened by the new forces, began to seek beyond their own coasts a field for their activities and their ambition. They naturally turned their eyes to the New World, recently displayed to view, where there was territory to be acquired beyond the dreams of ambition, and wealth beyond the visions of avarice.

[1] "It appears by the statute of 4 Hen. 7, c. 19, that six inconveniences are introduced by subversion or conversion of arable land into pasture, tending to two deplorable consequences. The first inconvenience is the increase of idleness, the root and cause of all mischiefs. (2) Depopulation or decrease of populous towns, and maintenance only of two or three herdsmen, who keep beasts, in lieu of great numbers of strong and able men. (3) Churches for want of inhabitants run to ruin, and are destroyed. (4) The service of God neglected. (5) Injury and wrong done to patrons and curates. (6) The defence of the land, for want of men strong and enured to labour, against foreign enemies weakened and impaired. The two consequences are: (1) These inconveniences tend to the great displeasure of God. (2) To the subversion of the policy and good government of the land, and all this by decay of agriculture, which is there said to be one of the greatest commodities of this realm."—Tyrringham's Case (Mich. 26 & 27 Eliz.), 4 Co. 36a.

In the New World, however, they were asked to see a province of Spain from which every foreigner might properly be excluded; and the Spanish title rested ultimately upon the validity of Papal grants. It was as clearly, therefore, to the interest of Spain to preserve the religious *status quo* as it was essential to English development to modify it. So the Spaniard, though quick, lively, and critical, became insensibly the bigoted supporter of the Pope, whilst the Englishman, slow, cautious, unappreciative of intellectual niceties, conservative if not reactionary, became as insensibly the Pope's most inveterate foe. That this should have been so remains on religious grounds an inexplicable anomaly; but it is explained if we see in Spain an Empire resting on the old order, and in England a country unconsciously committed to change by the dictates of her Imperial destiny.

Few periods of English history have been more glorious than that which began with the accession of Queen Elizabeth on November 17, 1558; but the reign which was to witness the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the final emancipation of England from the trammels of the Pope, opened gloomily enough. Both at home and abroad the prospect was equally dreary. At home a nation divided against itself in all the bitterness of religious strife; a bankrupt treasury; a disputed succession; for national defence a sprinkling of forts crumbling into decay, and a few vessels rotting into firewood in the royal dockyards: abroad, "steadfast enemies, but no steadfast friends." Each of the contending religious parties had had its day, the Protestants under Somerset, well-meaning but incompetent, the Papists under Mary, pious but fanatical; and the contest between them seemed to have been for pre-eminence in inflaming mutual hatred, in throttling the prosperity which had begun to revive under Henry VII., in despising the wise measures of naval and mili-

tary reform which Henry VIII. had inaugurated, and generally in dissipating the resources of their country whilst they neglected her true interests. Aloof from the vagaries of hostile factions the bulk of the nation hung in the balance, dubious in its creed, wavering in its loyalty, waiting upon events. Across the Border was Scotland, the hereditary foe of England and a perpetual menace to her peace. In Ireland, the unhappy home of mutiny when she is ruled and of anarchy when she is not, England could look for nothing better than an unfailing crop of anxieties, dangers, and mishaps. On the Continent the outlook was no less black. England could find allies only in the rebellious subjects of Spain or France, whose own existence was in jeopardy, and in the German princes, as lukewarm in their friendship as in their adherence to the religious and political principles on which that friendship was based. Towering above all European powers stood the mighty Empire of Spain, soon to become mightier still by the absorption of Portugal, its one dangerous neighbour and its one Colonial rival; and the eventual hostility of Spain was assured by its commercial monopoly, its Colonial exclusiveness, and its bigoted devotion to the Papal See. In France the implacable enmity bred of centuries of inglorious strife had been aggravated by the recent loss of Boulogne, without being appeased by the still more recent capture of Calais; and her prince had married Mary, Queen of Scots, who, as a Roman Catholic claimant to the English throne, with a title as good as Elizabeth's own, was enshrined in the hearts of many of Elizabeth's malcontent subjects. Opposed in their ambitions, the Court of France and Philip of Spain were alike in a loyalty to the Pope limited by their own convenience, alike also in an uncompromising hostility to England and the Reformation. This hostility reciprocal jealousies for the present neutralised; Philip would not oust Elizabeth to instal a French rival, and

France would not conquer England for the aggrandisement of Spain; but events might remove their discord, or a strong Pope might forge a bond of union. Confronted with such a situation England might well feel perplexed, and it is the temper of her people which is reflected in her sovereign; in Elizabeth's irresolution; in her political and religious shufflings; in her diplomatic prevarications; in the tortuous statecraft which preserved a hollow peace with France and Spain while it first aided, and then neglected, their Huguenot and Dutch rebels, which launched privateers to plunder Philip's treasure-ships and sack his Colonial cities, profited by them, and then disowned them; in her vain endeavours to flee before the first mutterings of the storm, and in her dauntless courage when the storm was breaking.

It has been reserved for modern psychological historians to discover that the struggle which culminated in the Armada was not a religious contest at all. The discovery would have aroused much interest among those who participated in the fray. Alive with the blended spirits of the Renaissance and the Reformation, stirred by love of adventure and of independence in thought and deed, the Elizabethan seaman quickly came into collision with the Spaniards as monopolists, but it was as bigots and as persecutors that he learnt to hate them. He did not stop to consider how just might be the Spanish claim to exclusive rights of commerce and colonisation in a world which Spain had discovered and made her own; nor whether his compatriots were imprisoned and executed, not as heretics, but as smugglers; nor what provocation they might have given; nor whether it was robbery to confiscate the profits of contraband trade; nor in what respect the Inquisition differed in atrocity from certain manifestations of his own religious zeal. It was enough for him that his Promised Land had become the inheritance of the worshippers of Baal, and with the

sword of the Lord he would go forth and smite them. His ambition accorded well with the views of the Queen. The episodes in which it involved him partook of the nature of war, but they were better than war, more profitable and less dangerous. Little by little they shook men's faith in the might of Spain, and sapped the reverence in which she was held; and they are to be the occasion of our introduction to two very famous names.

In the town of Plymouth there dwelt, in the days of Elizabeth, "a solid, middle-class Devonshire family," of some prosperity and of some local importance, whose name was Hawkins. The head of the family, in a previous reign, had sailed as far as Brazil, had found there a king with some curiosity about England, had brought him home, and had introduced him to Henry VIII. The founder of the house had been followed in his work and in his success by his son John. John was the possessor of high practical qualities, of energy, ambition, daring, resource; but his valour was tempered by discretion, and his ambition controlled by prudence. Avoiding the pitfalls into which the rashness of many of his contemporaries led them, he "stuck to business," eluded the animosity of the Inquisition, cultivated the friendship of King Philip II., and contrived in many a Spanish port to grow "in love and favour with the people." His friends naturally talked to him about the West Indies, and told him what a prosperous trade could be driven there by the importation of African slaves. Hawkins knew where the slaves came from; he knew how he could pick them up; he was troubled by no ethical considerations; and he decided to launch out into a new line of business.

Full of his idea, he went to London to float a company for the conduct of the experiment. He soon found himself in the position of commander and part-owner of a small squadron. In the month of October, 1562, the squadron weighed anchor; by one means or

1562-3. another 300 slaves were run on board in Sierra Leone; and the cargo was carried without mishap to St. Domingo. The Governor was informed of Hawkins's position. Hawkins, he was told, was on a voyage of discovery; he had got out of his course; he was short of food, and of the money to buy it with; he happened to have a few slaves with him; and he would be glad to do a little business. The Governor saw no great harm in a proposal which was acceptable to his colonists; and he had no reason to suppose that it would be distasteful to his Government. One point alone required consideration, and that was a novel one. Spanish importers of slaves paid a duty of 30 per cent.; what duty ought a foreigner to pay? The Governor did not know, and there was no precedent for the determination of the question; but terms were speedily arranged: Hawkins was to sell 200 of his negroes, and was to leave the remainder on deposit as a security for any additional duty. The sales went through quickly, and proved incredibly lucrative. Hawkins saw his way to gaining further profits; invested his cash in hides; and had them shipped for Spain. This done, he proceeded slowly homewards, confident that he would have a gilt-edged balance-sheet to display before his shareholders in England.

An unpleasant surprise awaited him at Plymouth. The man who had been sent to Spain to dispose of the hides, arrived there only to see his cargo seized by the Inquisition, while he himself fled for his life with the familiars after him; and peremptory orders were sent to St. Domingo for the confiscation of Hawkins's slaves.

The fact was that Philip was thoroughly alarmed; and when in a frenzied panic of cupidity and orthodoxy he had sealed his Colonial ports to foreign adventurers, he gave Elizabeth clearly to understand that a repetition of the unwelcome exploit would be productive of grave consequences. The English Queen was not to

be alarmed by words. In the consternation of Philip she saw a proof that Hawkins had touched him in the quick; and so far from prohibiting reprisals, she encouraged Hawkins to retaliate. In company with members of her Privy Council she subscribed for shares in a new venture; and a warship of 700 tons burden, amongst the largest in her navy, was placed at Hawkins's disposal. Thus equipped, in October, 1564, he sailed. All went as smoothly as before, and although in its main features the second voyage nearly resembled the first, there were certain significant innovations. The assumed reluctance of the authorities was overcome by a threat of violence; the veiled eagerness of the planters was gratified by a show of compulsion; the Spanish Government had to put up with a merely nominal tax; and Hawkins went home with his purchase-money in the shape of solid silver, to declare a dividend of 60 per cent. 1564. 1565.

It was not likely, after an expedition so splendidly successful, that Hawkins would let the grass grow under his feet. By the end of October, 1567, he was once more under sail for his West Indian Eldorado. But his lucky star was no longer in the ascendant. He had scarcely got out of home waters when a terrific storm caught him, and carried away his boats; and his flagship, the *Jesus*, sprang a leak, which showed that her timbers were severely strained. For a moment it seemed as if the enterprise must be abandoned; but the storm subsided, its ravages were made good, and the squadron proceeded. Slaves were picked up in Africa, not quite so easily as before, and were disposed of in the Spanish Colonies, though with increased difficulty. At last, however, the dusky merchandise was sold, and in place of it the *Jesus* was ballasted with "a vast treasure of gold, silver, and jewels." But a series of delays, each trifling in itself, had prolonged the cruise dangerously. If Hawkins was to elude the advent of the hurricane season, he must move speedily 1567.

1568. homewards; and that was just what the condition of his vessels made it impossible for him to do. Half-way up the coast of Cuba the gale which he dreaded burst upon him. The *Jesus*, which had been roughly handled at the outset of the voyage, lost her rudder, and the old leaks reappeared. Her consorts fared little better, and the whole squadron found itself in an awkward position. To get along in the teeth of the storm was impossible, and the nearest coast offered no refuge. The alternatives were shipwreck on the one hand and the doubtful hospitality of a Spanish port on the other: Hawkins, as he himself might have put it, was between the devil and the deep sea; and of the two he preferred the devil in the shape of San Juan de Ulua.

This place, more familiar to us under the name of Vera Cruz, was at that time of no small consequence. Lying at the foot of the gulf of Mexico, it was the channel through which was always flowing the Pactolian stream of Mexican traffic. It boasted a fine natural harbour, formed by a low ridge of shingle stretching across the mouth of the bay. On the outer side of the ridge the surf dashed ceaselessly; but within, where the water was deep and still, ships could come alongside and lie moored in security. Of the channels at either end of the ridge only one was practicable for vessels of any great draught.

Such was the place into which, in September, 1568, the weather-beaten English vessels sailed. They had found refuge from the elements, but they must have been conscious that their position was by no means secure: how insecure they could not then have guessed, but they were soon to discover. When Hawkins had left England eleven months before, the Spanish ambassador in London had warned Philip of his departure; and Philip had organised a special reception in honour of him. A fleet of thirteen powerful Spanish vessels had been got together; it was hourly expected at San Juan when Hawkins appeared there; and it was only

because the Englishman was mistaken for a Spaniard that he was allowed to enter the harbour unopposed. 1568. Hawkins quickly discovered the mistake, and hastened to make the most of his knowledge. The ships were run alongside the shingle island, the island itself was occupied, and a fort built to command the only navigable channel. Meanwhile apologies and explanations were sent ashore, which, pending the arrival of the Spanish fleet, it was deemed prudent to accept. On the very next morning, however, the fleet was sighted outside. Hawkins, as he himself afterwards wrote, was in two difficulties: either he must shut the Spaniards out of their own port, and leave them to be driven on to a lee shore, or he must let them come in and put up with the consequences to himself. Hesitating between a choice of evils, he had recourse to the Englishman's favourite expedient—a compromise. A message was sent off to the Spanish Admiral, informing him that an English commander was occupying San Juan harbour, and regretting that it would be impossible for a Spanish fleet to come in until it had given security for its peaceable intentions. What the Spaniard's feelings may have been on learning that the smugglers, whom he had come out to extirpate, were in possession of his naval base, and proposed to share it with him only on their own terms, is not recorded. His position was a precarious one, however; he must submit to an ignominious necessity, and observe the agreement as long as it suited his convenience to do so.

For a time all went well. The English crews had liberty to go ashore to the town, marketing and amusing their leisure. At mid-day on September 24 many of them were scattered about in San Juan; those who remained on board had gone to dinner. The intruders being thus lulled into a false security, Philip's officers seized the moment for carrying out an ignoble scheme. The English sailors in the town were suddenly and treacherously attacked; many fell at the first onslaught;

1568. the rest threw themselves into the water and struck out for their ships. In the meantime a huge Spanish hulk sidled up alongside the *Minion;* the galleons and batteries opened fire; and a party of 300 Spaniards swarmed off the hulk on to the *Minion's* decks. But Hawkins's men were tough customers, even in a surprise. The boarding party got a hot reception; those who survived it were driven overboard; and the *Minion* slipped her cable, set her sails, and stood out to sea, with her consort, the *Judith*, at her heels. Against the *Jesus*, unable to follow them, the odds were now enormous: yet she was fought with audacious pertinacity. Even when the battery on the island had been seized and its guns trained on the ship at their muzzles, the unequal struggle continued. It was only when fireships came down on him that Hawkins took to his boats, and cut his way out to the survivors of the squadron, leaving the Spanish flagship and three of her consorts at the bottom of the harbour, and the Vice-Admiral's galleon in flames alongside. For Hawkins, nevertheless, the disaster was overwhelming. In the *Jesus* his little fleet had lost their mainstay, and she was carrying every farthing of their "vast treasure." The survivors found themselves cooped in two tiny craft, with little water and few provisions; they were on a lee shore in vessels hopelessly out of repair; they could not get home, and they did not know where else to turn to. It was imperative that something should be done, so they ran across the gulf, hoping against hope that they might pick up some supplies on the other side. Nothing of the kind could they discover. One thing only was certain, that, if they all went on, they would all starve together. A hundred volunteers embraced the only possible alternative, were put ashore on an unknown coast, and fell, most of them, after strange vicissitudes, into the hands of the Inquisition. The rest struggled forlornly on. The *Judith* outsailed her consort, and dropped anchor in Plymouth Sound before the year

was over. The *Minion* fared worse; sickness broke 1568.
out on board, to which most of her crew succumbed; the rest, worn and emaciated, could scarcely sail the ship. In this condition they were compelled to put into Vigo, the last place in which to look for a sympathetic welcome; but fortune favoured them at last. Some English vessels chanced to be lying there; and, thanks to the men and stores they gave him, Hawkins was able to look once more upon the sands of Penzance—a 1569.
sight as dear to him at the moment, perhaps, as that "vast treasure" of his in San Juan harbour.

So Hawkins was home, bringing nothing but glory with him, and glory had not been the object aimed at by the royal owner of the *Jesus*, or by those who had financed the expedition, whilst the heroes themselves would have preferred more tangible results. The King of Spain's servants had ruined them by the foulest means; by such means as were in their power they would recoup themselves at the expense of the traitors. Such at least was the code of lawless justice that commended itself to the most illustrious of their officers. Francis Drake had commanded the *Judith* during the voyage, and had been the first to gallop to London with the news of its disastrous termination. The son of a Devonshire Protestant who had fled to Rochester from the religious ferment of the West, Drake's West country blood had early shown itself in an inclination towards a seafaring life. He was still a boy when he took a billet in a coasting vessel. Things went prosperously with him: he served with distinction, and found favour with his employers. In course of time his skipper died, leaving a will which made Drake the owner of the vessel, and converted him from a zealous servant into a prosperous master. But the routine of humdrum prosperity had few attractions for his adventurous spirit; in exploits like those of Hawkins he saw at once that he would find true scope for his energies; and he knew well enough that

Hawkins, who was his cousin, would welcome him as a recruit. So Drake had got rid of his trading brig, and as master of the *Judith* had sailed under Hawkins's flag. The outcome of that enterprise had left him with two firm determinations: he would recoup himself for his unmerited losses; and the comrades whom he had been compelled to leave behind, he would rescue or revenge. These intentions he kept to himself; for it was through too much talking that Philip had got wind of the last voyage, and the inopportune arrival of the Spanish warships at San Juan had been the end of it. Close upon four years had been spent in silent preparation when in 1572 he put unobtrusively to sea. With the following summer he was home again, and his crews were as ready with their cash as they were chary of discussing the means by which they had got it. The wildest rumours found credence, but none so wild as the truth. Drake had pounced upon the world's treasure-house at Nombre de Dios, and the merest accident alone had saved it from his clutches. At Cartagena, the capital of the Spanish Main, he had cut out a fat merchantman from under the guns of the citadel. Society and commerce alike had been paralysed by the seizure and loot of Venta Cruz; and the Spanish ships that sailed those waters—a Spanish lake, as they had always regarded them—counted themselves lucky if it was once only in the course of that tumultuous season that they had been swooped upon, overhauled, and stripped of their valuables. From Panama on the Pacific coast the annual output of the Peruvian mines was carried over on mule-back to the Atlantic sea-board; and the Spanish Main was congratulating itself on the disappearance of the corsairs, when it gleaned unpleasant tidings to forward to Madrid. Eighteen buccaneers, with Drake at their head, had landed quietly on the isthmus; had learnt from the runaway slaves who infested the forests the time when the mule trains passed and the route

which they followed; had waited for and surprised them; had relieved them of an immense hoard of pearls, rubies, emeralds, diamonds, gold, and silver; and had silently decamped with as much of the booty as they could carry.

The capture of the Peruvian treasure was serious enough; but, if the Spaniards had only known it, there was worse to come. While patrolling the isthmus in quest of his prey, Drake had mounted a giant tree that towered above the tropical forest, and had seen beneath him, stretched in sunny splendour, the waters of the Pacific. First of all Englishmen he had penetrated the mystery which Philip had so studiously hidden; and since, where Spanish sailors could go, an English ship could follow, he resolved that first of all Englishmen he would navigate those hidden seas. With the help of God, he said, he could do it; there was no immediate prospect of doing it with the help of his Government. At home in England the capricious wind of Elizabeth's policy had veered round again since Drake had started; and so far was the Government from countenancing any new scheme of aggression that Drake found himself in no small danger of being handed over as a common pirate. Knowing that his hour would come, and prudent enough to wait for it, he shrouded himself for a while in the obscurity of those Irish mists in which the reputation of the brilliant Essex was being lost to sight for ever. Then in 1577 the change came. Alva was displaced in Flanders; Don John of Austria, the new Regent, talked openly of placing Mary, Queen of Scots, on Elizabeth's throne; English Papistical rebellion once again was rearing its many heads; and from the throne downwards there was no talk that was not directed against the Spaniards, that did not dwell upon exploration, adventure, and war. Drake was speedily scudding forward before the favouring breeze. Beneath the thin disguise of a commercial venture to Egypt, the *Pelican* of 100 tons, the

Marygold of 30 tons, the newly-built *Elizabeth* of 80 tons, a provision-ship called the *Swan* of 50 tons, and a pinnace of 15 tons, were fitting out in the Plymouth
1577. dockyards. On November 15 the little squadron stood out to sea, to brave the unimaginable terrors of an undertaking in which none but Magellan had ever met with success. A few prizes were picked up as they proceeded, but their troubles soon began. In the waters they were leaving summer was coming on apace; yet they were plunging into the most bitter of winters. Cold the most intense, winds the fiercest, waves the highest they had ever known, met them, baffled them, hurled them back. Sorcery was at the bottom of it, they fancied; and Drake was faced by mutiny, an evil
1578. worse than magic. On June 20 they found in Port St. Julian a short respite from the toil and stress of their seven months' cruise; but an ominous spectacle awaited them, for in that desolate spot the hand of man was revealed to them in the gallows on which, some sixty years before, Magellan's mutineers had expiated their fault. It seemed as though the finger of Heaven was pointing out to Magellan's successor the solution of his difficulties—difficulties which owed their origin, it is sad to think, to the greatest of Elizabeth's Ministers. The cautious Burleigh had remained uninfected by the prevailing war-fever. In favour of peace at any price, he hated Drake for stirring up the Spanish hornets' nest; and unable to check him openly, he had embarked upon a devious course that came suspiciously near treason. He had determined to thwart Drake by suborning his lieutenants, and in one Thomas Doughty he had found a tool ready to his hand. Doughty was a scholar and a gentleman, and, in his own opinion, the military commander of Drake's troops and, as such, Drake's equal. Sent ashore at Mayo to forage, Doughty, instead of obeying orders, had used the opportunity to tamper with his men. He had accused Drake's brother of pilfering from a prize

cargo, and investigation had shown that he himself 1578.
was the culprit. He had attempted to usurp the post of captain of the vessel which carried him; for weeks the vessel had disappeared; and it rejoined the squadron only to plunge Doughty into acts of flagrant mutiny. There was nothing for it but to follow the stern precedent set by the Portuguese commander. Doughty was brought to trial by a jury of his peers, who found him guilty of mutiny, and, on his own confession, of betraying to Lord Burleigh the secret of the expedition, the great secret of Drake and of his Queen. By the unanimous verdict of his comrades the accused was condemned to death. Two days later Drake and the prisoner knelt together at the altar in token of forgiveness, dined together, embraced, and parted; and then on a block over against Magellan's gallows Lord Burleigh's agent washed out his treachery with his blood.

With discipline restored and ships overhauled, the squadron then proceeded. On August 20, 1578, the passage of the straits began. An anxious fortnight followed, amid squalls and currents, ice and rocks; but endurance and seamanship surmounted all obstacles, and launched them at length upon the golden sea. Expecting to find there only light airs and a gentle swell, they were rudely undeceived. It seemed, indeed, as though the powers that ruled that wilderness of ice and night resented the intrusion upon their domain, for no sooner had the ships turned northward into the Pacific than a terrific storm burst upon them. The *Marygold* foundered, carrying all hands to the bottom. Wynter in the *Elizabeth* went home in despair, to report that all Drake's vessels were lost except the *Pelican*, and that the *Pelican* had almost certainly met with the same fate. Fortunately the fact was otherwise. The gale which had sunk the *Marygold* had torn Drake from his comrades and sent him flying under bare poles 600 miles to southwards of the Horn. It

1578. had always been supposed that, south of Magellan's Straits, there was an unbroken stretch of land to the Southern Pole: and Drake had made a notable discovery when he dropped anchor amid the islands where the Atlantic and the Pacific meet. At last the wind went down, and the *Pelican*, transformed as she now was into the *Golden Hind*, steered northward in quest of the *Elizabeth*. No Wynter could be found, but the blow was softened by events. Not a hint of danger had reached the Pacific coast. At Valparaiso a galleon with four hundred pounds' weight of gold in her was lying in the harbour. A cutter from the *Golden Hind* shot alongside; and to cries of "Down, dog, down," in broken Spanish, the astonished crew found their hatches battened down on them and their gold transferred to the hold of the English ship. What the town contained of value was added to the store; and in the highest spirits Drake's men went rollicking up the sleepy coast. At Tarapaca they found some Spaniards dozing on the quay beside a pile of silver bars: their siesta was disturbed as little as possible, and the silver was quietly lifted over the *Golden Hind's* bulwarks. A gentleman driving a load of silver home ran across a party of Drake's men, who thought it a pity to see him at such humble work, and took charge of his team; but unfortunately they lost the way to his house, and he never saw either them or his silver again. Quickly as they ran up the coast, however, their fame ran quicker. At Arica a galleon laden with silver had scurried off towards Panama. They overtook her at Chuli, but without an ounce of silver in her; it had just been heaved overboard to save it from Drake's clutches. The place where they expected to make the real *coup* was Lima, and the question was—which would get to Lima first, the *Golden Hind* or the fame of her exploits? All depended on speed and luck: and northward they dashed with every inch of canvas set. But luck was against them. They slipped into Lima harbour in the

middle of the night of February 15, 1579. Late as it 1579.
was, a sleepy customs officer came off to inspect the new arrival; and Drake's guns gave him a fright that almost killed him. A moment later Drake was at work ransacking the defenceless shipping in the port, and cutting the cables to let it drive ashore out of harm's way; but not an ounce of stuff could be found. Eleven days before, the produce of the Peruvian mines had been shipped for Panama, and a great vessel which men called the *Spitfire* had sailed, laden with gold and jewels, and ballasted with silver. The *Golden Hind* was fast, however, and the Spanish treasure-ships were always slow; whilst even if the worst came to the worst, they might run in and cut her out from Panama itself. As though the disappointment of the failure at Lima was not infuriating enough, a dead calm fell on them as they drifted out to sea. Seeing his chance, the Viceroy sent out four ships to burn the pirate where she lay; but at close quarters his troops thought better of it, and put back for more assistance. While they were fetching it, the breeze sprang up, and the *Golden Hind* sped forward on the chase. An exciting chase it was. The Spaniard had fourteen days' start, and the whole success of the expedition hinged on her capture. Prize after prize fell into their clutches as they hurried along, and rich ones too, to whet their appetite for the prey. The quarry, meanwhile, was proceeding leisurely on her way, in blissful unconsciousness of pursuit. She wasted some precious days at Truxillo, taking in more bullion. At Paita, Drake was told that she had sailed only forty-eight hours before; he would recognise her by her peculiar rig, it was added, and he offered a gold chain to the man who first caught sight of her. As the sun was setting on March 1, the reward was claimed. John Drake, the Admiral's nephew, recognised the *Spitfire* close in-shore. The *Golden Hind* was sailing two knots to the *Spitfire's* one, and presently the Spaniard, seeing company coming, hauled to the wind for a little

1579. to wait for it. The position was still critical, for if the *Spitfire* should take the alarm, she could run in under the shore and escape; so Drake trailed casks astern to reduce his speed. At last the brief twilight came and went, the breeze sprang up fresh off the shore, and, like a greyhound loosed from the leash, the *Golden Hind* pounced on her prey. A single broadside brought the astonished treasure-ship to a stand; a prize crew was put on board; and the *Spitfire's* head was turned out into the Pacific. A week later she was cut adrift, and the *Golden Hind* was laden with an empire's revenue.

The Admiral's object was accomplished, and there was now no thought but of home. But how was he to get there? There were several possible routes. The Spaniards themselves imagined that he might cross the Isthmus of Panama, and build himself another ship on the shores of the gulf; but not even Drake would attempt such a feat in the heart of the enemy's country. To return by the Straits of Magellan was to hazard his plunder in the seas which had engulfed the unlucky *Marygold*, even if the Straits themselves were not patrolled by Philip's warships; and a passage to the north of the American continent was looked for in vain. But Drake had studied his charts to some purpose. With a daring which it is now impossible to appreciate, he determined to steer straight across the Pacific and work his way home round the Cape of Good Hope. He started on July 26, 1579. For ten weeks the waste of waters was unrelieved by any glimpse of land. The New Year found the *Golden Hind* in the gravest danger she had as yet experienced. She had run full upon a sunken reef; and if the breeze, which had blown her on, had not veered opportunely round and blown her off again, Drake and his Peruvian treasure would have gone to the bottom together. As things turned out, no great harm was done. The *Golden Hind* ran safely round the Cape, and smoothly up the African coast; and by Michaelmas, 1580, the

first English ship to trace a furrow round the globe had triumphantly dropped her anchor in Plymouth Sound, after an absence of close upon three years. 1580.

The news of Drake's exploits got speedily abroad, and all England rang with it. The Queen was delighted; Burleigh and his timid colleagues on the Council were silenced by the shouts of applause; every one else of note had his pickings from Drake's plunder. The Spanish Ambassador fumed in vain. The contents of the *Golden Hind*[1] were scheduled, indeed, but not until Drake had been warned to secrete a good part of them; and a peer's fortune was carved for him out of what was left. Then the *Golden Hind* herself was run ashore in the Thames; and while London came and gaped at her, Elizabeth dined on board, to knight her corsair host.

Drake had come home at a fortunate moment, or he might have been welcomed less cordially. The relations between England and Spain were strained to breaking point. Philip was pushing things too far. He availed himself of a vacancy in the throne of Portugal to drive out the rightful heir, and add the great Portuguese Empire to his own gigantic dominions. He hatched plot after plot in England for the assassination of the Queen and the invasion of the country. He stirred up rebellion in Ireland, and landed troops of his own to support it. He invited a fleet of English corn-ships to come over and relieve his famine-stricken

[1] The amount of the treasure was afterwards estimated at a sum equal to "about two millions and a half of our money . . . not counting unregistered treasure such as money and jewels." Spanish accounts assessed the plunder of the *Spitfire* and of one other vessel alone at over nine millions, which suggests to Mr. Julian Corbett "that the Spanish calculations of damage were as heroic as those afterwards applied in the case of the *Alabama*" ("Drake and the Tudor Navy," Appendix F., vol. i. p. 431).

In the twenty years which elapsed between the San Juan disaster and the Armada campaign, Drake must have brought home "comfortable dew of Heaven," as he called it, amounting to at least six millions of our money, a large part of which he seems cheerfully to have spent in the service of his Queen and country.

provinces, and seized them when they reached his ports. Elizabeth was compelled to recognise that she had war in substance if not in name; and in a transitory mood of resolution she let loose her privateers. Dreading lest the orders should be cancelled, Drake hastened out to sea with his fleet but half prepared. At Santiago, the chief of the Spanish islands at Cape Verde, a mass of smoking ruins marked where the squadron had
1586. passed. On New Year's day, 1586, they reached St. Domingo, the seat of Philip's West Indian government, took it, and held it to ransom at 25,000 ducats. A month later Cartagena, the capital of the Spanish Main, received the honour of a visit, and enjoyed it much as St. Domingo had done, though at the price of an extra 80,000 ducats. The expedition had been so eminently successful that its commander had only one regret: for some "reason best known to God" he had missed the Plate gold fleet by a matter of twelve hours' sail. But here he was at home again, ready to strike wherever the Queen should decide.

He was back in the nick of time. The most alarming intelligence reached the Government. A band of conspirators, prompted by the priests and led by Anthony Babington, were to murder the Queen; the Roman Catholic peers were to rise; and Mary, Queen of Scots, was to be proclaimed. Such opposition as might be attempted was to be put down by Parma's troops, who were to be conveyed across the Channel by a great Armada from Spain. England, the mainstay of the Reformation, was to be crushed back into the Papal fold; and into this pious channel the energies of the whole Papal world were directed. The Pope preached the Crusade, and Philip was to be the crusading champion. In every harbour of Spain Philip's troops were concentrating; his ports teemed with shipping; his yards rang with the clang of shipwrights' hammers; his storehouses bulged with stores and munitions for "the English enterprise." The irresolute Elizabeth

was again stiffened into resolution by the magnitude of the peril. The complicity of the Scots' Queen in the plot being proved up to the hilt, her tempestuous career was hastened to its bloody close. Not as a common pirate now, but as the Admiral of an English fleet, Drake was unleashed once more. Before the Queen should have time to repent of her rashness, he slipped away with thirty sail behind him. Instinct taught him that Philip was powerless without the command of the sea; that the surest way to give it to him was to allow his vast preparations to proceed unchecked; that the true function of a fleet is to strike without waiting to be struck; and that in attack lay the best means of defence. Let him catch the Spanish navy unprepared and in detail, and the peril would be averted. On April 19, 1587, his squadron hove-to before Cadiz. Before it lay the great Spanish naval depôt, thronged with storeships and transports, bulging with arms and stores. Here was, if not the Armada itself, at least its stomach and its legs. A council of war was hurriedly called on board Drake's flagship: were they to go in and attack, or were they to go home and report? With the time-honoured traditions of their service behind them, the Queen's officers wanted time to decide. Spain was the virtual mistress of the world; her prestige was as yet unsullied; the entrance to the harbour was difficult; the harbour itself was strongly fortified. Drake conducted the council in his own style. Having listened patiently to the dilatory counsels of his subordinates, he told them what he was going to do. He had come to Cadiz, not to think or to talk, but to act. Over and over again across the ocean he had tickled Philip's extremities, and nothing very dreadful had come of it: he intended now to face the ogre in his den, to give a singeing to the King of Spain's beard. As the sun set and the breeze freshened, the English squadron sailed in, right under the forts whose guns bellowed in vain, till they fetched up in 1587.

1587. the middle of the roadstead. A scene of indescribable confusion followed. Riddled by the English broadsides, the enemy's galleys were swept aside. All over the outer harbour the Spanish vessels scurried to and fro, with the English cruisers in pursuit, seizing, scuttling, burning. The work finished there, the turn of the inner harbour followed; and the great galleon of the Admiral of Spain, with a crowd of mighty vessels besides, augmented the blazing ruins of the Spanish fleet. Without the loss of a man Drake had done his work, and done it thoroughly: a million ducats and a year's work would scarcely make good his ravages; for the time being the crusade was paralysed; and England could breathe freely for another year at least.

The burning shipping at Cadiz, however, had lighted the flame of Philip's ardour, and roused the dormant energies of his fierce nature. With the exception of a great merchantman with a million of money in her which chance threw into Drake's clutches as he sailed home, Philip's Colonial revenues came in as usual, and every farthing he had was devoted to the Armada. So quickly were the preparations carried on that considerable alarm was felt lest the Armada should still sail before the year was out. In England they prepared with feverish haste to meet it, and the result was unsatisfactory enough. The militia was called out, but it was a body without discipline, without organisation, without arms or stores, and placed under the command of Leicester, the nimblest of courtiers, but the worst of generals; whilst the troops whom it was to meet were the finest infantry in Europe, led by the most famous general of the day. On paper the naval forces were rather less disproportioned to their task. One fleet under Lord Henry Seymour was to patrol the Straits of Dover and take care of the Prince of Parma. Lord Howard of Effingham was appointed Commander-in-chief under the style of Lord High Admiral. To Sir

Francis Drake in the *Revenge* was entrusted the com- 1588.
mand of a cruiser squadron of 30 sail. It sounded well, but unfortunately it amounted to little. The Armada consisted of 130 vessels, the largest afloat, and 30,000 men. With every kind and size included, the Royal Navy of England could muster at the most some 25 vessels; and England's hope lay now in the merchant cruisers of London, in the privateers trained in the school of Hawkins and Drake, and in the chiefs by whom they had been trained. Nor did any one know how Philip's campaign was planned. Probably the Armada would come up the Channel to join hands with Parma in the Netherlands and throw him across into Kent or Essex; but Scotland and Ireland were perpetual menaces, and it might be there that the blow would fall. Drake pined to make another dash for Spain and strike the weapon from Philip's hand, as he had done at Cadiz. The Queen was frightened, however, and could not spare him; then, hugging a delusive hope of peace, she would permit nothing that might hinder the negotiations. There would be no war after all, she assured her Admirals; so her ships' crews were reduced to half their fighting strength, short rations were doled out from day to day, and Drake, putting his men to big gun practice to keep up their health and spirits, got a sharp reprimand on his extravagance for his pains. Meanwhile the spring and summer wore away, the wildest that any man could remember; and when Drake at last extorted permission to be off, it was only to be driven back by a south-westerly gale. It was too late now. The wind which baffled Drake was bringing the Duke of Medina Sidonia across the Bay; and while the English fleet lay weather-bound in Plymouth, none too well supplied with victuals, or powder, or shot, the beacon fires blazed out the signal of alarm, and men knew that the Armada was in sight.

A time-honoured tale recounts how Drake was playing bowls on Plymouth Hoe when the news reached

1588. him, and how he calmly answered that he would finish the game first and beat the Spaniards afterwards. As a piece of bravado calculated to keep up his sailors' spirits, the thing is in keeping with the man and his methods. However this may be, with his game finished or unfinished, Drake and his squadron beat laboriously
July 20. out against the wind, and the dawn found them creeping inshore to the westward, to get the weather-gauge of the Spanish fleet. As the day wore on, the breeze slackened, and a curtain of mist and rain fell between the fleets. Unless Drake could get to windward of Medina Sidonia before the sun rose again and so bustle him past, Plymouth would lie open for the Spaniards to sail in. So thought Drake, not knowing that Medina Sidonia, intent only on joining hands with Parma, would suffer nothing to tempt him from his course. By the time the Armada was off Looe, Drake had formed up to windward behind them, whilst Howard tacked across their bows and put about again to join him. Drake had succeeded in his manœuvre only to find that he might have saved himself the trouble of attempting it. Without so much as a sidelong glance at Plymouth, Medina Sidonia sailed solemnly on, and the true meaning of his tactics flashed across Drake's mind. At all costs he must be prevented from reaching Parma; but how was it to be done, so long as his fleet retained its crescent formation impenetrable to attack? The Spanish commander was not likely to court a general engagement. Profoundly ignorant of things naval and military alike, he thought only of reaching Parma unharmed, to shift on to his shoulders a responsibility too heavy to bear. His subordinates were less nervous and less patient. Infuriated by the curs who kept snapping round his heels, Recalde in the *Santa Anna* turned at bay. In a moment the *Revenge* and her consorts closed round him, and it took the whole of Medina Sidonia's fleet to extricate him, with his ship severely mauled. In swinging round to help

him, Don Pedro de Valdez fell foul of his neighbour, 1588.
broke his bowsprit, lost a good part of his rigging, dropped astern in the night, unperceived or unheeded, and in the morning had to strike his colours to the *Revenge*. So, not without misadventure, the Armada reached Portland, and lay there becalmed. Then, as July 23.
the dawn of Tuesday came, there happened that which, but for English seamanship, might have cost England dear. The wind had died away in the south-west, the English ships having had the weather-gauge; to their consternation it was from the north-east that it blew now. They made a dash for the opening between the Armada and the shore, but the Spaniards were too quick for them. Foiled there, they turned and ran straight out to sea, whilst the great galleons of the enemy, supposing them to be in flight, came lumbering after them in a long, straggling line. Meanwhile the breeze had been backing towards the south, as though to meet the brave little vessels manœuvring to get it, and with the English to windward and the serried Spanish ranks broken, the aspect of affairs quickly changed. With the wind behind them now, Drake and his fellows doubled back along the path they had come. Nearest to them was Recalde's flagship, already badly knocked about in the fight on Sunday. She was a total wreck when they left her, and each vessel of Recalde's squadron, as it struggled up to its Admiral's aid, got the full benefit of the concentrated English fire. Away to leeward, off Portland Bill, the Spanish galleasses, transports, and store-ships struggled in hopeless confusion, with Frobisher, Fenton, and a sprinkling of English cruisers busily reaping the harvest which Drake's manœuvres had sown. Between the two sections of his fleet was Medina Sidonia in his majestic flagship, the *San Martin*, alone; and a sad time he had of it, as the returning English ships swept by again with a broadside from each one as she passed. But the veil of night came down once more, and once more

1588. Medina Sidonia's fleet gathered round the *San Martin*, with three gaps only in the ranks and a ship every here and there that moved heavily from her
July 25. wounds. On Thursday, off the Isle of Wight, there was another "hot fray" and but "little done" when
July 26. it ended. Friday brought another calm; and on Satur-
July 27. day the Armada's anchors splashed down in Calais roads, within an hour's sail of Parma's camp.

Eyes less keen than those of the English Admirals could see that things might go desperately for England
July 28. yet. As men went to church at home that Sunday to call upon the Lord of Hosts to help them, there was held in Lord Howard's flagship the memorable council upon whose decision their liberty depended. The decision was promptly made. Long ago in San Juan harbour a Spanish Admiral had sent down fireships on the ill-starred *Jesus;* Drake and Hawkins were quick to learn and slow to forget; and the weapon which had then been forged was to recoil on Spanish heads. There would be no moon that night—only a swirling tide on the Armada's anchorage, and what they had to do must be done quickly. From amongst the gallant vessels round them eight victims were selected, dismantled, and coated with pitch from stem to stern, from keel to topmast; and presently, in the gloom of the moonless night, eight blinding masses of flaming fire bore down with wind and tide on the terror-stricken Spanish fleet. Then the black pall closed down again, and the English waited till the morning light should reveal the effects
July 29. of their device. Dawn came at last, and with it had come Drake's hour also. In frenzied efforts to avoid the burning ships each Spanish vessel had shifted for herself, heedless of her consorts' whereabouts, ignorant of her own. Some had brought up again, but the rest had slipped the only anchors they had, and the bulk of the fleet had drifted away two miles or more to leeward. Close under Calais fort one great galleon was ashore on a sandbank, heeling over with the ebbing tide. Beyond,

towards Gravelines, the *San Martin* and some forty of her consorts lay dotted about in isolated groups. Greedy of booty or blind to his chance, the Lord Admiral turned aside to capture the stranded galleon. But for Francis Drake that day there was to be no shadow of turning. With every inch of sail crowded on, the *Revenge* in the van, and Hawkins and Frobisher in her wake, quick as thought the English fleet swooped down. What brave sailors could do, the Spaniards did; never did the chivalry of Spain shine with so pure a light as in the gloom of that disastrous day. The English had the superiority of numbers now; they sailed twice as fast, deftly circling round the galleons, crowding them in on each other, deluging them with a storm of shot. The English guns were of longer range, and could be fired three times as quickly; the Spanish balls flew harmless over the low English hulls, but in their own towering sides every English shot found its mark, till the carnage on the crowded decks made the scuppers run red with blood. Yet there was no talk of surrender, as ship by ship they settled down, hurling curses at the "infernal English devils" flitting on in their dance of death. At three in the afternoon the powder was spent on both sides, and the rain fell in sheets. Of the forty galleons which had striven to form up round Medina Sidonia in the morning there were but sixteen left. Suddenly the wind shifted into the nor'-nor'-west, and with grim delight the English watched the shattered survivors of their cannonade drift away on to the treacherous Flemish coast. Every moment, as the breeze freshened, brought the sandbanks nearer. So Drake left them for the night, to fetch more powder and begin again, if need should arise. With morning the wind freshened to a gale. The Spanish ships drove along faster than ever; six fathoms, their pilots signalled, then five, then four. It was but a question of minutes now, when, as suddenly as it had veered before, the wind changed again back into the south; and, saved as by miracle, 1588.

the battered fragments of the Armada staggered into the North Sea.

For a while Drake followed them. When the Dogger Bank was reached, however, he saw that the dirty weather was to become dirtier yet, and he resolved to leave the Armada to the mercy of the waves. With putrid food and with water-casks emptied by the English shot, with hulls riddled and rigging shot away, the Spaniards struggled forlornly on. At length, to the north of Scotland, the gale caught them. Some went down in the enormous seas: others were cast away on the islands round the coast: and on the wild Irish shores long lines of corpses marked where Spanish sailors had struggled to land, only to be murdered for their jewelled swords or for the purses in their belts. Of the 30,000 men who had left the Spanish ports in all the pomp of the Invincible Armada, scarce 9,000 saw Spanish soil again; and of these, starving, wounded, parched with fever and with thirst, some hundreds only survived to recount the tale of their woes. So it was to this at last that the prayers, and hopes, and endeavours of the Roman Catholic world had come, as it was for this that the Elizabethan seamen had voyaged, and fought, and watched, and waited. Spain and England, the Pope and the Reformation, alike had invoked the arbitrament of God: and God had decided.

It has been the fashion to suppose that the expansion of England dates from the eighteenth century, but there is much to be urged in favour of the view that Drake and the Elizabethan seamen should be deemed the true founders of our Empire. It was not merely that, by foiling Philip's crusade, they preserved for England her national existence. By his recognition of what the command of the sea meant, and by his insight into how it could be won and how it should be used, Drake wrested from Spain that overwhelming maritime supremacy which none had dared dispute. Those very corsair

raids, our pride in which is chastened by our sense of their moral blemishes, "ushered in the grandest era of English maritime adventure," and paved the way for English Colonial expansion. The New World, which Spain had discovered and made her own, Hawkins and Drake unveiled in all its wealth and beauty before their country's wondering eyes. In the Old World too they revealed new possibilities. Judged by its momentous consequences, the most important of Drake's captures was a Spanish merchantman whose charts and papers laid bare to London merchants the golden secrets of the East India and China trades, firing them, in the conception of the East India Company, to lay the foundations on which the fabric of our Indian Empire was to rise. So it was that in the English Salamis off Gravelines the guiding hand of Drake urged his country forward along the road that led to empire.

CHAPTER II

THE INFANCY OF THE EMPIRE AND THE STRUGGLE WITH HOLLAND

Elizabethan colonisation — Sir Humphrey Gilbert — Sir Walter Raleigh—Legends of El Dorado—Raleigh's attempts in Virginia—Sir Ferdinando Gorges—Progress of Virginia—The Pilgrim Fathers—The Massachusetts Company—Dutch rivalry in America—The East India Company founded—Dutch rivalry in the East—The Amboyna massacre—The Navigation Act—The English and Dutch navies—Blake and Van Tromp: the first shot fired—English successes: Tromp superseded—Blake and De With: the Kentish Knock—Battle off Dungeness—Indecisive action: escape of Tromp—Exhaustion of the Dutch—Cromwell and Spain: Jamaica—Charles II. carries on Cromwell's work—Results of the Dutch wars.

The signal defeat which Drake and his comrades had inflicted upon the Spanish navy was barren of tangible results. Had the great Admiral been suffered to have his way, he would have pushed home the attack while Philip's Empire still reeled beneath the blow it had sustained, and would have hurried off to the New World to gather those luscious fruits of victory that hung ripe for shaking into his mistress's lap. But the Queen had no such views. In the eyes of Elizabeth and of her Ministers the war was confined to the necessity of self-defence. Except for the thought of recovering Calais —the futile aspiration of every Elizabethan patriot— the Government confined its ambition within strictly insular bounds. Blind to that glorious horizon where the future of England was to be, they could not see how momentous were the Imperial issues at stake in the long struggle; and when peace came at last, the Indies and the ocean trade were passed over in ominous silence.

It has been well said that "the idea of the expansion of England was alive, and Elizabeth was the first Little Englander." Admirable in the hour of danger, she was found wanting in the day of triumph. Yet she is not without excuse. As long as she sat upon the throne, her country was not ripe for expansion. Circumstances had forced upon it the command of the sea, but war consumed the energies which might have been directed towards colonisation, whilst it created no army for territorial conquest. The force of these considerations is emphasised by the failure of the private enterprise which ignored them. Yet that failure was glorious, and hid the seeds of a stupendous success.

In the annals of the privateer warfare which had cast a halo of questionable splendour round the leading houses of the West country, no family had won a more prominent place than the house of Champernowne. To a daughter of that house belongs the honour of being the mother of Sir Humphrey Gilbert by one marriage and of Sir Walter Raleigh by another. From "the mimic voyages of discovery" which had sent the echoes of their boyish glee ringing merrily down the wooded borders of the Dart, these men grew up to invest the fancies of childhood with the sober airs of a man's ambition, and to them may be attributed the first conscious efforts at the expansion of England. In company with intrepid discoverers of the school of Frobisher, Gilbert devoted himself to the project which played so large a part in the imagination of his contemporaries of finding a North-West Passage to India and the China seas. It is in no small measure to the eager advocacy with which Gilbert pressed its claims that the chimerical scheme owes its interest. The discovery of such a passage, he urged, by opening up a route more direct than any yet known, would throw open to English enterprise the golden portals of the East; probably it would lead to countries still unknown, where colonies might be established, and a market created for

English goods; whilst the stimulus to English shipping would be of incalculable benefit to the national defence. It was a pity that so fine an ambition should have rested upon so poor a basis. Nevertheless it may be recorded in Gilbert's honour that by landing at St. John's, Newfoundland, and erecting there the arms of England, he laid the first brick in the Imperial edifice.

August 5, 1583.

Though it was Gilbert's brain which first conceived the Imperial idea, his illustrious half-brother is more usually regarded "as the pioneer and prophet of empire." Raleigh's schemes were no more patriotic than Gilbert's, and little, if at all, less visionary; but Raleigh had the skill to bedeck his immortal fancies with the magic of the pen. The avowed object of his ambition was to win for the Queen "a better Indies than the King of Spain hath any"; and in those vast territories of the South American continent which had escaped the grasp of Spain, he believed that he might yet eclipse the achievements of the Spaniards in Mexico and Peru. So long ago as the year 1535 the Spaniards had found at Quito an Indian who had come across the mountains to carry the greetings of the Cacique of Bogotà to the Inca of Peru. To his white hosts the ambassador boasted of the greatness of the chieftain whom he represented, and of the untold riches of his home. He spoke to them also of the sacred lake where the water goddess had her abode, and of the rites with which she was worshipped. To this lake at specified seasons the ruler of the land repaired, and, coated with gold-dust from head to foot, plunged into the holy waters to wash away the sins of his people. Hither, too, his subjects came to propitiate the goddess with images of gold and silver; and so numerous were the worshippers that many a well-worn path led down to the edge of the water.[1] In Europe the wildest stories

[1] Mr. E. J. Payne conjectured that, although these offerings were individually small in value, yet vast quantities of precious metals must have been gradually accumulated in the lake, and that the

were soon associated with the name of Eldorado, the gilded prince. It was thought that the last chieftain of the Inca stock had led the remnant of his people across the Andes to found in the fertile valleys of the Orinoco another kingdom beyond the Spaniards' ken. Many an intrepid explorer had striven to penetrate the jungles which guarded the frontiers of this mysterious kingdom, and a certain Juan Martinez professed that he had actually visited Manoa, where the chieftain dwelt. He first set foot within the city at noon, and travelled all that day till nightfall through the streets, and all the next from dawn to sunset ere he came to the Inca's palace. In the course of a seven months' visit he found that the wealth of Manoa was no less remarkable than its size: like the palace of Alcinous, the very buildings gleamed with precious metals; and it was the pleasant custom of the place to speed the parting guest with a gift of as much gold as he could carry. Such was the tale which Martinez told to the monks of Porto Rico; and Raleigh would have been no child of his age if he had not swallowed with avidity every rumour which vaunted the glories of the mythical city.

There is no need to repeat the oft-told tale of Raleigh's failure in Guiana. Before that splendid dream had caught his fancy, he had set his hand to the sober work of colonisation. In 1584 he obtained a charter which authorised the permanent occupation of such territories in North America[1] as were still unclaimed; and by the Queen's request the name of Virginia was selected for this other England across the seas. In pursuance of the charter seven vessels sailed in the spring of 1585, with Sir Richard Grenville in command. The squadron had a prosperous voyage,

greater part was long ago extracted by the patient industry of the Spaniards ("History of the New World called America," vol. i. p. 455). Others are of opinion that, with the engineering resources at their disposal, the Spaniards can have succeeded but imperfectly, and that the lake is still rich with the fruits of Indian piety.

[1] A map of North America will be found facing p. 180.

and by August Grenville was able to sail away, leaving one hundred colonists established at Roanoke under Robert Lane, the governor designate. The prospects of the colonists were of the brightest: in the boundless territory around them there was everything to hope for from the clemency of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the confiding friendliness of the Indians. Unluckily events quickly belied this bright promise. Englishmen had not yet learnt the rude lessons of the backwoods, nor acquired their now traditional aptitude for dealing with native races. By a series of cruel punishments, as impolitic as they were unjust, Lane soon alienated the friendship of the Indians; the cultivation of crops was neglected; and the relief ships which Grenville had promised did not appear. In this plight Drake found the infant Colony when he touched there on his return from the West Indies in 1586; and Lane and his men were only too glad to escape on board his vessels from the prospect of death by famine or by Indian massacre. Scarcely had they departed when Grenville and the relief ships arrived. Leaving a handful of men at Roanoke to keep alive English claims to the deserted settlement, Grenville returned to England to enlist fresh volunteers and to raise more funds; and in the spring of 1587 a second batch of emigrants sailed. But they were too late for the relief of Grenville's little garrison, whose eyes had looked eagerly but vainly for the promised succour. Upon that devoted band the Indians had avenged the wrongs which they had nursed in sullen silence since the days of Lane; and, when the new settlers arrived, the tangled luxuriance of sub-tropical vegetation had already invaded the ruins of the little fort. It was an omen of gloomy augury for the new settlers, whose attempt proved no more successful than the last; nor was it by Raleigh's adventurers that success was eventually to be achieved.

When Raleigh fell upon the evil days of a sovereign

from across the Tweed who was ready to soothe the monopolist susceptibilities of the Spaniards by the sacrifice of his own most illustrious servant, the mantle of the Imperial martyr fell upon the shoulders of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, his friend and colleague. Gorges had the good fortune to enlist the sympathy of Chief-Justice Popham, who liked to pose as the patron of adventurous spirits, and by his instrumentality a new charter of colonisation was obtained on April 10, 1606. A year later a fresh band of pioneers, destined at last to sow the seeds of a mighty harvest, reached the Chesapeake; and presently, to the music of the axe, the defences of a new settlement began to rise on the banks of the James River. Unfortunately, however, Gorges and Popham had been compelled to invoke the assistance of capitalists, and to the capitalists a profitable investment was the sole end and object of the enterprise. From the community across the Atlantic, maintaining a precarious existence in the face of famine and disease, the Company in England demanded dividends, and demanded them promptly, threatening without scruple to leave the Colony to its fate unless gold were at once sent home. The explanation of this preposterous demand was to be found in the fact that fancy painted Virginia as strewn with lumps of ore, like flints on Kentish plough-land; and lust for gold was mainly responsible for the internal troubles by which Jamestown itself was distraught. For the most part the settlers had gone out with the pleasant expectation that the only toil which awaited them was to stoop for precious metals at their feet; they were unprepared for any manual labour, and few of them were fitted for the rigours of Virginian life. An acute observer, who followed with attention the fortunes of the colonists, was so unfavourably impressed by "the extreme beastly idleness of our nation," as shown by their conduct, that he confidently expected that they "would rather starve and die than be brought

to labour." So ill, indeed, did things go that in June, 1610, there seemed no further chance of warding off the starvation that continued to stare them in the face. Desperate as the project appeared, it was resolved to abandon the settlement in the hope of finding a fishing vessel to carry them back to England, and the fugitives were already afloat on the Chesapeake when they were met by vessels coming to their relief. These were a squadron under Lord de la Warr, bringing provisions for a year, new hope, and a new authority.

The arrival of Lord de la Warr marks a turning-point in early Virginian history. When once the illusion of mineral wealth was dispelled, the colonists began to look elsewhere for the fortunes they had come to seek, and with the cultivation of the tobacco plant their prospects assumed a brighter hue. So lucrative did the new export trade soon become that nothing else was thought of in the Colony; buildings fell into disrepair, and the corn crops were forgotten, for there was not a planter with leisure to reflect that man cannot live by tobacco alone. But the dangers of success are easier to combat than the difficulties of despair, and these excesses were quickly remedied under the stress of a sharp experience. In the material sphere the future of Virginia was then assured, and under the charters of 1619 and 1625 the Colony secured all that it could legitimately expect in the way of political autonomy.

Far different were the causes which were to plant the next outpost of civilisation on the borders of the wilderness. Amid the many eccentricities of religious opinion which marked the reaction against the old uniformity, a sect had arisen in England, animated by a sincere but angular piety that shrank from the comprehensive embrace of the Established Church. With the desire for conformity that inspired the authorities, these men and their opinions came into open conflict, and so vigorous were the repressive

measures initiated by the Government of James I. that in 1608 the bulk of the Separatist community sought refuge in Leyden from the hatred with which they found themselves pursued. There, in the absence of the gaoler and the judge, they attained to a certain degree of temporal tranquillity. But the bark of spiritual perfection required a fairer anchorage, and they must seek it on the silent shores of the New World, remote indeed from the old homes and the old interests, but remote also from the infection of sinful men. Accordingly in 1620 a small vessel, the *Mayflower*, was bespoken, in which in the month of July the enthusiasts set sail in quest of their Christian Utopia. It was not till November that they came in sight of land, to find the country bound in that iron grip of winter which had so often repelled the invaders of American solitudes. Though physical suffering had few terrors for the resolute men who now scanned that desolate coast, the outlook was one at which even they might have felt appalled. At Cape Cod, where they had made the land, some seventy miles of coast on which the ocean rollers broke in foam and spray over a thousand unknown shoals, separated them from the goal of their voyage. The captain declared that he could not reach the Virginian coast, so the *Mayflower's* head was turned northwards, and on November 11 she hove to under the lee of Cape Cod. Her passengers were now confronted by the problem of selecting a site for their new settlement. The pilot of the vessel, who had been on the coast before, had an indistinct recollection of having visited a harbour on the mainland near by, which he fancied might suit their purpose. Unluckily the shallop had been injured on the voyage, and while a clumsy carpenter made good the damage, some precious weeks slipped past. By the time that the exploring party was ready to start, mid-winter had come upon them in full severity. On the third day the wind, which had been rising, blew a gale; their clothes,

saturated with spray, froze on their bodies; and the dangerous shore which they knew to be near at hand was hidden from sight by a veil of driving snow. A wave carried away the rudder. The mast went overboard in a squall. At that moment the mouth of the harbour appeared through the snow; but the entrance was fringed with breakers, and the pilot, thinking that his dismasted boat was unmanageable, lost his head. Fortunately others were calmer than he, and the boat was safely beached when night came.

The spot was already known to English mariners, who had called it Plymouth in memory of home; and a glance sufficed to show that, if this was the place the pilot had had in his mind, he had not over-rated its merits. The still, deep waters of a land-locked harbour offered a safe anchorage for ships, and the brooks that in fairer weather would run splashing down to the bay gave promise of pure water in ever-renewed supplies. Hither, therefore, on December 16, the *Mayflower* was summoned, and the work of clearing began. It was a slow and dreary task, for the weather was as wild as ever, and in the bitter winds and icy rain death came stalking down upon the victims of exposure and toil. But the battle was bravely fought, and gradually the victory was won.

Virginia on the one hand and the Pilgrim Fathers on the other are typical of the divergent tendencies of early English colonisation. To men who found their civil and religious liberty in jeopardy from the growing despotism of the Stuarts, the unlooked-for longevity of the New Plymouth settlement suggested an easy, if not a happy, issue out of their afflictions, and within a few years the Massachusetts Company was following where the Pilgrim Fathers had led. Enjoying material advantages which had been denied to its predecessors, the Company's venture met with immediate success. The first batch of emigrants reached Massachusetts Bay in September, 1628; a year afterwards they were

followed by Winthrop, the first Governor, at the head of 1,000 recruits; and four years later the Colony could boast a population of 4,000 souls. Of better birth than the Plymouth settlers and of higher purposes than the Virginian, Winthrop's colonists soon took the foremost place; their capital, Boston, became the recognised centre of the social and intellectual life of all the Colonies to the east of the Hudson; and the religious and political institutions under which its inhabitants lived approximated very closely to Puritan ideals.

The Colonies did not struggle into existence without gaining something in energy and cohesion under the stress of European competition. To the south of them were the old possessions of Spain, to the north the new settlements of France; whilst into their midst came the ubiquitous Dutch. The insight of that nation of merchants had not missed the possibilities of commerce in America, and Dutch traders had settled along the coast wherever an Indian could be found, and a deal in furs set on foot. As early as 1622 the ambassadors of James at the Hague had lodged a formal remonstrance with the States General upon the trespassing proclivities of their subjects; but the opulent Dutch West India Company, which claimed a province of its own under the name of New Netherland, was not to be deterred by diplomatic protests, and proceeded unabashed upon its way. Having completed Fort Nassau on the Delaware, and Fort Orange on the site of Albany, in 1626 it set about the erection of Fort Amsterdam—humble forerunner of the great city of New York. Upon both sides of the Atlantic an aggression the more flagrant that it had not been allowed to pass unchallenged excited the wrath of those who deemed themselves its victims. The Director of the Dutch Colony was bringing home a valuable ship-load of furs when a storm caught him and drove him into Plymouth: the Governor drove him out again, but without his cargo. Inspired by the example of their enemies, the

Plymouth colonists proceeded in 1633 to the Connecticut, and established there a fort under the eyes of Dutch troops who could not venture to proceed to extremities. The success of this undertaking suggested to its authors an experiment at once more hazardous and more questionable: and, caught red-handed in an attempt to surprise Fort Nassau, they learnt, as prisoners of war in New Amsterdam, that the forbearance of their rivals could be relied upon too far. For the moment this disaster damped the ardour of the colonists; but it was not long before Dutch officials were complaining of renewed encroachments on the Connecticut, at New Haven, on Long Island, and along the shores of Delaware Bay: and there were some who boldly advocated the conquest and appropriation of the entire Dutch province.

The rivalry of Dutch and English colonists in America had its counterpart in the bitter commercial jealousies which chequered the course of English adventure in the East. While Raleigh nursed his dream of founding an empire in the new continent which Columbus had discovered, the merchants of London cherished the hope that they might follow in the footsteps of Vasco di Gama to richer prizes in another clime. In 1594, before the thrill of excitement evoked by Drake's splendid capture in 1587 had subsided, James Lancaster came safely home in the first English ship to sail by the Cape route to the Indian seas, and the freight she bore surpassed the wildest dreams of the most sanguine speculator. If any fresh incentive was wanted, it was supplied by the outcome of Lancaster's experiment; but when some six years afterwards the East India Company was officially born, it found that other hands had already wrested from Philip of Spain his Portuguese inheritance in the Indian seas. A few years before, when Philip's sentinels still guarded the portals of the commercial paradise in the Eastern Archipelago, an eminent publicist in Holland had shown by incontro-

vertible reasoning that monopolies violate every canon, human and divine: but circumstances alter cases, and as soon as the Armada had sounded the knell of Philip's power, the Dutch forgot the iniquity of a system which they now hoped to resuscitate for their own benefit. Henceforth the lodestar of Dutch policy, a policy uninterruptedly and ruthlessly pursued, was to gain possession of the spice archipelago, and to keep it against all comers: and the executors of this policy, the East India Company of the Dutch, backed by the entire nation, and handling an enormous gold reserve, had little to fear from the competition of an English syndicate, crippled by the foolish apathy or the still more foolish patronage of their sovereign, and hampered in all their operations by the timidity of the English investor, who reduced his contribution in proportion as the need for it increased. It was worse than useless for statesmen in London and at the Hague to settle the terms upon which their subjects should dwell and trade together in the clove and nutmeg islands of the East, when those who were expected to abide by such terms were the rude sailors and rapacious factors of the contending Companies, whose mutual hatred daily contact served merely to inflame. The scramble for treaty rights with local princes and for trade monopolies now here, now there, passed rapidly through its successive phases from taunts to blows, from blows to the inevitable catastrophe. When once they had contrived to oust the English Company from the nutmeg islands of Banda and Pularoon, the Dutch, to complete their 1621.
work, had only to get rid of the remaining English factories at Amboyna in the heart of the clove trade. Their castle at Amboyna and the lucrative trade which it was designed to protect were guarded by them with peculiar jealousy: no foreigners were allowed within the fortifications; even their own mercenaries were excluded. On the evening of February 11, 1623, a Japanese soldier in the pay of the Dutch Company

approached one of the sentinels on guard before the fort, and asked him how many men were on duty, and how often the watch would be changed. Probably he wished to discover the extent of his own duties for the night; possibly his curiosity was merely idle; but when the matter was reported to the Dutch Governor on the morrow, he affected to regard it in a very sinister light. The unhappy mercenary was seized and put to torture; it was suggested to him that the English were plotting to surprise the fortress, and that he himself was a spy in their service; and a confession to that effect was at last wrung from him. Nine of his comrades admitted, under similar treatment, that the Governor's suspicions were well founded; and a drunken English surgeon corroborated the absurdity. On this evidence every man of English birth in the islands was seized and subjected to torture: such of them as had not been in Amboyna itself at the time even the Governor could accuse of nothing more incriminating than indirect complicity in the plot, and these were spared: the rest, ten in number, were condemned to death and summarily executed.

News travelled slowly in those days, and it was not till May, 1624, that the grim tidings reached home. The Dutch tale was incredible. In all the English factories in the clove islands there were no more than eighteen men of English birth, and those at Amboyna itself possessed between them three swords, two guns, and half a pound of powder—scanty numbers and inadequate materials wherewith to capture a castle strongly fortified and garrisoned by 600 troops, to overpower eight armed merchantmen in the harbour, and to add Amboyna to the English dominions. The incident was not only a tragedy, it was an outrage; and it was long before the remembrance of it was effaced from the national mind, long before there was any pardon for the Dutch Company which had instigated it or for the nation which screened their crime.

Fertile as it is in mighty issues at home, the period which follows has for the most part only an indirect bearing upon our Imperial history. Rent by the strife of Roundhead and Cavalier, England had not leisure to keep a firm hand on her possessions across the seas, to annex new dominions, or to prosecute old quarrels. It was only when a strong Government had climbed to power by means of the scaffold upon which Charles I. embalmed his memory in blood, that England resumed her place in the Imperial lists. The pacific counsels which had formerly proceeded from the apathy or the embarrassment of the first two Stuarts were no longer to prevail with the vigorous patriots who shaped the policy of the Commonwealth. In August, 1651, a bill, afterwards to acquire notoriety as the Navigation Act, was presented to Parliament: for the moment, indeed, the measure was not pressed; but in the flush of self-confidence born of the crowning mercy at Worcester it passed into law. The public profession of its authors was that it was an attempt to foster English commerce at the foreigner's expense: their secret comfort, that its inevitable result would be to ruin the trade of the Dutch. It provided that only English vessels, or the vessels of the country from which the goods came, should carry European products into any port in England or her Colonies, excluding the produce of every other Continent unless brought in vessels owned and manned by men of English birth. So far as a legislative enactment could produce such a result, the measure was well designed to wrest the carrying trade of the world from the hands of those who then held it: Dutch merchants would no longer supply the English demand for the silks and spices of the East; the herring of the North Sea and the spoil of more distant waters would no longer be brought in Dutch bottoms to the English market; nor would Dutch ships any longer carry the manufactures of Europe to the English Colonies, to exchange them for sugar on the quays of

Barbados or for tobacco in the rivers of Virginia. Grievous as was the blow dealt them by the Act, the United Provinces might perhaps have made shift to put up with it, if the pretensions of the Commonwealth had stopped there; but they did not. Regardless of the doctrine, then struggling for recognition, that the neutral flag covers the goods, and upon the pretext of reprisals against the French, with whom England was then at war, English privateers swooped down upon every Dutch ship that showed its flag in the Channel, and confiscated such part of its cargo as could by any possibility be thought to be of French origin, as though their object was to ruin the trade which the Navigation Act had been unable to touch. To the expostulations which this piracy provoked, the Commonwealth statesmen replied by reverting to the old grievances of Amboyna and Pularoon, and by exhuming the old claims of their country to the sovereignty of the seas. To tell Dutch sailors, in their present temper, that they had got to dip their flags in the presence of an English ship was as certain to provoke hostilities as a formal declaration of war.

The revolutionary Government would perhaps have been less arbitrary, if it had not been aware of the conditions under which a war would be waged. The Dutch ambassadors had threatened in lofty language to make enormous additions to their naval forces, but the threat had found but a faint echo in their dockyards, whilst their existing fleets were ill found, and divided against themselves by the animosity of rival political factions. Moreover, in the event of war, the great ocean trade on which the Dutch Republic depended, not for prosperity alone, but for existence itself, would prove a heavy incubus upon the Dutch commanders: they would be fettered by nearly defenceless convoys, and their movements would be restricted to the great trade routes. Their enemies laboured under none of these disadvantages. The navy of the

Commonwealth, driven in self-defence to claim a place in the front rank of maritime powers, was a well-organised and efficient force; merchantmen armed for the occasion and gentlemen privateers had given way to a fleet of warships permanently employed in the service of the State; and the hands of Blake, the Commonwealth's Admiral, had forged a weapon of whose efficiency Royalist squadrons and foreign fleets had made painful proof. The statesmen of the Commonwealth knew well enough that, if it should come to a war with the Dutch Republic, the preponderance of advantage on their own side could not lightly be faced by commanders however able or by sailors however bold.

That it was in truth going to come to war soon became apparent. The English Commander-in-Chief, Blake, and the great Dutch Admiral, Van Tromp, were cruising in the Channel in anticipation of a rupture, when on May 12 an English war-ship and two frigates 1652.
fell in with three Dutch vessels, and promptly opened fire because one of them refused to dip her flag. As soon as this news reached him, Tromp hurried off without a moment's delay to expostulate with the English Admiral. What line he himself would take in the matter of the flag was probably still undetermined; but his numerical strength was nearly treble that of Blake, and he had told his Government that it was not his practice to salute unless in the presence of a superior force. Blake, however, recognised no such limitations to the English prerogative, and as Tromp bore down upon him with his flags unlowered, fired a couple of shots across his bows to remind him of his oversight. In no humour to submit to this sort of reminder of pretensions in any case galling to him, Tromp retorted by firing a broadside into Blake's vessel, and by hoisting the signal for a general engagement. The fray lasted till nightfall, when the Dutch, caught in the rear by a second English squadron which had heard the sound

1652. of firing and come up to Blake's assistance, were forced to retreat with the loss of two ships. Confident in their own superiority, and interpreting Tromp's retreat as a sign of weakness, the wiseacres of Westminster proceeded with ineffable stupidity to violate every rule of naval strategy. Blake was despatched with a portion of the fleet to prey upon the Dutch herring-boats and upon such of the enemy's merchantmen as should make for home ports by the North Sea route: Ayscue, just back from a cruise of intimidation on the coasts of the Royalist Colonies, was posted in the Downs with such ships as had not accompanied the Commander-in-Chief. The immediate object of these arrangements was successfully attained: Blake came up with the herring fleet, captured the guard-ships, and dispersed their charges; Ayscue intercepted a fleet of forty-seven merchantmen in the Channel, and only seven escaped. But Tromp had been quick to perceive the weakness of such dispositions; and if a calm had not shielded Ayscue, while a gale saved Blake, he would have made his enemies repent of the ignorance or temerity which had permitted the dispersal of their forces in the presence of a powerful hostile fleet. However, Tromp had lost the chance of enforcing his lesson, and before it recurred, his masters showed that the English Government did not enjoy a monopoly of imbecility in maritime affairs. Ostensibly because he had failed to save the herring fleet, really because of the Orange complexion of his politics, Tromp was suspended from his command. If any other Dutch officer had a tithe of Tromp's ability, it certainly was not Vice-Admiral De With, who was appointed his successor. His appearance in the suspended hero's place was the signal for something very like a mutiny in the Dutch navy; but no reception, however hostile, could daunt this Hotspur of the sea. He jauntily told his grumbling sailors that he was going to "bring them into the presence of the enemy, and the devil might bring them off again." Before September was over, he

had kept his word. On the 25th he appeared off the 1652.
Goodwin Sands, under the lee of which Blake was waiting. For two days the weather was too wild for the English to come out; but early in the afternoon of the 28th the Dutch were cruising amongst the intricate sandbanks which lie round the Kentish Knock when Blake came up on a favourable breeze, and bore down to attack. The battle which followed raged fiercely till nightfall, with no great skill displayed on either side. The Dutch manœuvred to entice the enemy on to the sandbanks, and fired high to shatter his rigging: the English had been told to wait till they got to close quarters, and then to fire into the enemy's hulls. The wisdom of the latter advice was seen in the result: whilst Blake's loss was small, the Dutch had several vessels sunk: and when the wind veered round on the morning of the 29th, giving them the weather-gauge, they were glad enough to slip away to the shelter of their own ports without waiting for any more fighting.

Though the advantage in this battle had rested with the English, it proved to be an advantage for which a heavy price was to be paid. The States General, recalled to their senses by the exploits of their Republican Admirals, at once reinstated Tromp in his command. He put to sea again on November 21, and, having been joined by Evertsen, the Vice-Admiral of Zealand, anchored on the 24th off Dunkirk with a fleet of no less than eighty-five men-of-war. To meet this combination the Parliament had done what it could; but many of the English ships were refitting in the Thames, and others had been detached, some to protect the London colliers, some to intimidate the King of Denmark, the rest for service in the Mediterranean. If any hopes were entertained that there would be no fighting so late in the year, those who cherished them reckoned without their indefatigable antagonist. As the month of November drew to a close, Tromp appeared in the Downs, forcing Blake to put to sea;

1652. and at midday on November 30 the opposing fleets met off Dungeness. In the waning light of the winter afternoon a furious fight ensued. To oppose the eighty-five ships of the enemy Blake had no more than forty-five sail, and twenty of these sheered away from the muzzles of the Dutch guns as the fleets got into action. Three of the English ships, which had outsailed their consorts, were left for a time to confront unaided the bulk of the enemy's fleet. But even their gallantry was surpassed by the prodigies of valour performed by two little English craft, the *Bonaventure* and the *Garland*, whose captains contrived to grapple Tromp's own flag-ship, the *Brederode*, and attacked her with furious audacity: nor was it till the crews of both had been cut to pieces, and the deck of one blown into the air along with the Dutch boarding-parties which had scrambled on to it, that the Dutch flag-ship was rescued by her consorts. With the loss of these two vessels, and of three ships sunk, Blake was able to extricate himself from an engagement in which he had stood up to nearly four times his own number for the space of at least five hours. The tidings of the battle were received with pride in England: it was felt that it is not victory alone that sheds lustre on a country's arms.

The eternal preoccupation of the Dutch Admiral with his country's ocean trade deprived him of the fruits of his hard-won success. His first duty was to convoy the merchantmen bound for the Biscay ports, and there he had to wait till the home-coming wine fleet was ready to gather under his wing. Meanwhile every nerve was strained in England to prepare for his
1653. return. Towards the middle of February Blake was beating down the Channel at the head of seventy sail, when news reached him that Tromp was coming with as many men-of-war, and with a huge convoy in his wake. In spite of this information Blake allowed himself to be surprised on the 18th with one division of his fleet far away to the westward, another as far off on

the east, and with his own squadron of twenty ships in no sort of battle order, thereby forfeiting all that the Navy Commissioners had done to redress the balance of the fleets, and going into action at a greater disadvantage even than in the battle off Dungeness. Nor was Tromp the man to lose the chance of crushing the enemy in detail, if occasion offered, and immediately on a favouring breeze he bore down to attack. After a commander has placed himself at a hopeless disadvantage by his tactical blundering, it is perhaps but a small thing in his favour if he demean himself with courage: at all events Blake did so, but, as was only to be expected, his squadron was severely mauled; and by the time his consorts had struggled up, night had put an end to the fray. 1653.

On the morrow Tromp, anxious about his charges, and short of powder and supplies, spread out his warships in a crescent behind the convoy, and hurried them all along towards the shelter of home ports. Blake pursued hotly throughout the day, cutting off several Dutch men-of-war and capturing fifty of the merchantmen, so that on the evening of the 20th Tromp was glad enough to shelter his harassed charges amongst the shoals off the Calais coast. From this position—so the English pilots averred—it would be impossible for him to extricate himself without disaster; but there were more things possible to the indomitable Admiral's seamanship than the pilots dreamed of, and when they scanned the scene of his anchorage in the cold light of the next February morning, not a Dutch sail was anywhere to be seen.

On both sides the strain of so tough a struggle was beginning to be severely felt. Such had been the successes of the Dutch in the Mediterranean that England found her Levant trade going; her Baltic trade, on which the fleet depended for the material requisites of war, was gone: and so insecure had the passage southwards from Newcastle become, that coals could only be

1653. bought in London—if bought at all—at famine prices. Even worse was the plight of the Dutch Republic. In Amsterdam, yesterday the busy mart of all the world, the gloomy fronts of 3,000 empty houses looked out upon the silence of the grass-grown streets: two or three girls were alone employed in establishments which had lately resounded with the labour of many hundred hands: from one silent factory to another he who had employed a score of operatives passed in a fruitless search for journeyman work for himself: and who could say, after Tromp's recent experience, whether another merchant fleet would ever reach the idle quays? Peace could no longer be delayed when the Dutch, again worsted in the fight off the Gabbard on June 2, 1653, had been decisively defeated in the battle of the Texel some seven weeks later, in which Tromp gained the last favour that the war could now bestow—the honour of a warrior's grave.

Though the political prescience of Cromwell had shown him the necessity for a war with the Dutch Republic, it was as a hateful necessity that he always regarded it; and his enlightened statesmanship had barely stifled the mutterings of an outraged Protestantism, when England quarrelled with a people to whom he would have had her bound in the ties of a common religion. To the revival of hostilities with Spain which ensued upon the Dutch peace, his religious zeal had no such objections to offer, whilst by the con-

1655. quest of Jamaica he opened a new chapter in the history of his country, the long and chequered chapter of expansion by force of arms. But it was in the determination to wrestle a fall with the Dutch for trade and empire that Cromwell had been most true to himself, and it was this policy alone which survived the baneful effects of King Charles II.'s restoration, for here alone the interests of the country harmonised with the inclinations of the King. Of the factors of the East India Company, groaning under Dutch insolence, of

its merchants, fuming before the closed doors of the Eastern markets, there was not one who hated Holland more cordially than did Charles II.; as a monarch he hated its republican government, nor could he readily forget that, as an exile, he had been expelled ignominiously from its borders. To him are due the Second and Third Dutch Wars (1665–67 and 1672–74), which set the seal on the work which the earlier struggle had left unfinished, but into the history of which there is no occasion to enter in detail. If it is strange that the triumph of Cromwell's policy should have been due to the personal exertions of the third Stuart, it is still more strange that the final victory of England should have been won with the aid of French troops, of French ships, and of French gold. Yet the fact is so, and is little to the credit of King Louis' statecraft. It was in an evil day for France that her King dreamed dreams of European conquest which blinded him to the perception of what the true destiny of his land required, and induced him to lend his aid in removing the one serious obstacle to the growing maritime power of England. Upon the Secret Treaty of Dover, by which Charles and Louis pledged themselves to destroy the Dutch Republic, much rhetoric has been mis-spent by English historians: there would have been less declamation about the ignominy of the King of England if there had been a more just appreciation of the folly of the King of France.

By the conquest of the Dutch province of New Netherland the English rounded off their possessions on the Atlantic seaboard of North America, but the importance of England's triumph cannot be measured in acreage of ceded lands. Its true significance was of another kind, as a Dutch commander of the time perceived: "the English," he said, "are our masters, and consequently the masters of the sea." 1664.

CHAPTER III

WARS OF MARLBOROUGH

England and France—The Spanish Succession—Its importance—Folly of Louis XIV.—Marlborough—He marches to the Danube—The Schellenberg—Marlborough and Eugene join hands—They reconnoitre the French position—Blenheim—The capture of Gibraltar—Marlborough and Villeroy—Ramillies—French preparations—Oudenarde—Siege and capture of Lille—Malplaquet and the end of the war—Peace of Utrecht; results of the war.

England had now outstripped both of the nations by whose competition she had been menaced in the race for Empire, and in each case it had been by the aid of one rival that she had obtained her triumph over another. She had profited by the rebellion of the Netherland provinces to hasten into decomposition the moribund empire of Spain. She had profited by the ambition of Louis XIV. to undermine the prosperity of the vigorous empire of Holland. As in her first friends, the Dutch, she had found her second rivals, so she was now to find in her second friends, the French, the third and most formidable of her foes. The struggle with France forms, beyond all question, the grandest chapter in our Imperial annals; it extends over more than a century of scarcely interrupted strife, and when at last the smoke rolls away from Nelson's guns at Trafalgar and from Wellington's at Waterloo, it leaves the sun of British Empire ablaze in a cloudless sky.

The Revolution of 1688, which placed William III. on the English throne, plunged England into an European contest in which she had little or no substantial interest. The War of the League of Augsburg

was the work of William III., in part as the instrument (1688-1697)
of old religious antipathies, in part as the champion of a new European statesmanship, but not under any aspect as the apostle of English expansion. France had not yet entered the world-wide lists to wrestle a fall for world-wide Empire; the dreams of Continental expansion by which Louis was obsessed, constituted no menace to England, immune from his aggression beyond the waters of the Channel, and already finding in distant lands the true field for her activities and her ambition. But a great change came over the political scene as William's reign drew to a close. In the month of November, 1700, the King of Spain sank childless to the grave, leaving three claimants to dispute the succession to his vast inheritance. The Dauphin of France, the son of Louis XIV. by his marriage with the elder sister of the dead King, possessed the strongest right by virtue of birth; but his mother upon her marriage had expressly renounced all claims upon the Spanish throne, and this renunciation had been confirmed by Louis in the most emphatic terms. The second competitor was the Emperor, who was only a cousin of the Spanish King, but who was hampered by no renunciation. Nearer in blood than the Emperor, but barred, like the Dauphin, by express disclaimer, came the third claimant, the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, who was favoured by the neutrals because he belonged to no powerful house, but who, for that very reason, was incapable of pressing his claim. Although the Dauphin relinquished his rights in favour of his second son, Philip of Anjou, upon whom the choice of the dying King had fallen, the substantial question at issue was, whether the Spanish inheritance could be suffered to swell the possessions of the House of Bourbon. In such a question England was vitally concerned. Spain was indeed decrepit, but her empire had not yet been dismembered, and might still be quickened into new and vigorous life.

Entrenched in his peninsula beyond the Pyrenees, the ruler of Spain could look out upon the Atlantic on the one hand, on the other upon the Mediterranean, where Gibraltar, the Balearic Isles, Sardinia, and Sicily stood as the outposts and pillars of his power; the Spanish Netherlands would give him an outlet on the Northern seas and a considerable share in the Northern trade; by means of Milan, Naples, and their dependencies he would be dominant in Italy; and in the New World there was but little which would not own his sway. To allow the Bourbons to appropriate this inheritance was to imperil the whole future of England's sea-power, colonisation, and commerce.

The importance of the crisis was not unperceived by William III., but the English people, who thought that enough of their blood and money had already been squandered in support of their Dutch sovereign's policy, were in no mood to plunge into another Continental war, and would have permitted Louis to dispose as he pleased of the Spanish crown, if only he had conducted himself with common prudence. It seemed, however, that Louis had been blinded to all prudential considerations by the magnitude of the stake for which he was playing. In the winter of 1701, in a time of unbroken peace, he sent an army into the Netherlands to seize the line of fortresses which recent treaties had established as a check upon his ambition in that quarter; and in the following autumn, upon the death of James II., the Stuart Pretender was ceremoniously acknowledged at the French Court as the rightful sovereign of the British Isles. In a moment these acts of arrogant folly [1] aroused England from her apathy, and threw her, in a frenzy of anger and alarm, into the arms of the enemies of France.

[1] Whether it was so intended or not, England had some reason for regarding Louis' recognition of the Old Pretender's claims as a deliberate insult to herself.

An alliance, called the Grand Alliance, was concluded between England, Holland, and the Emperor, which was joined, shortly after the declaration of war, by Prussia, Portugal, Savoy, and some of the minor princes of Germany. William being now dead, the command of the English troops was entrusted to the Earl of Marlborough, whose wife had obtained a complete ascendancy over the mind of the Princess by whom William had been succeeded on the throne; and the Dutch Government also chose him as their commander-in-chief. Although Marlborough was to prove himself one of the greatest generals of all time, and although in Prince Eugene of Savoy, who commanded the Imperial troops, he had a colleague whose ability fell but little short of his own, the war opened somewhat gloomily for the Alliance. Whilst Eugene, ill supported and supplied, struggled to hold his own against the French in Italy, the Allied armies suffered defeat in two pitched battles in Germany, where, in addition to these misfortunes, Brisach fell to the Duke of Burgundy, and Ulm and Augsburg were seized by the Elector of Bavaria, who had thrown in his lot with Louis.[1] Somewhat better fortune attended the Allies in the Netherlands, the scene of Marlborough's command, where several fortresses were captured from the French; but more than one design that promised well was frustrated either by the jealousy of the Dutch Generals or by the over-cautious inertness of the Dutch Field Deputies, who were hung like mill-stones round Marlborough's neck. As the campaign of 1704 approached, Louis, who had observed the ineffectiveness of the Allied operations without having understood the difficulties with which Marlborough had had to contend, began to think that he might crush the Alliance by a single blow. His design was to march on Vienna through Bavaria, and bring Austria to her knees. Marlborough saw the danger, and communicated to

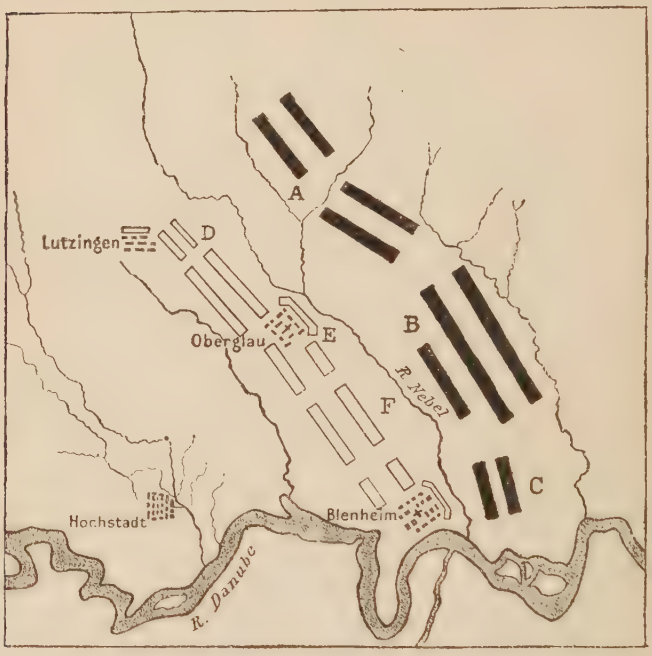
[1] A sketch map to illustrate this chapter is given at p. 72.

1704. Eugene, who was alone capable of entering into them, both his hopes and his fears. His hope was to effect a junction with Eugene in Bavaria, and compel the enemy to a general engagement; his fear, that this plan, like so many others, would make shipwreck on the rock of Dutch opposition. On the pretext of operations on the Moselle, however, he extorted permission to move his troops, and forthwith broke up his
May. camp and marched away, his actual destination known to none save Prince Eugene.

The news that Marlborough was in motion caused considerable perplexity to the French Generals, who had long since ceased to expect vigorous action on the part of the English commander. On the whole they were disposed to think, as the Dutch themselves believed, that the valley of the Moselle must be his real objective, and thither Villeroy was ordered to proceed; but dispositions were also made for the protection of Alsace, which seemed also to be threatened. Having mystified them still further by a series of adroit manœuvres, Marlborough then settled down in earnest to the work before him; and the next the French heard of him was that he had completed a wonderfully rapid march from the Meuse to the Danube, and had
July 2. crowned it by the assault and capture of the Schellenberg, where 12,000 picked troops from the Bavarian army had been dislodged with heavy loss from a position of great strength. This reverse, which completely demoralised his army, and exposed his country to all the horrors of war, so far unnerved the Elector that it was judged expedient to send Marshal Tallard hurriedly to his aid. One French force under Marsin was already with him; and on August 6 the French and Bavarian forces joined hands in the vicinity of Augsburg. On the same day Eugene, who had followed on the northern side of the Danube the progress of Tallard along the southern bank, encamped at Hochstadt, not far away from Marlborough's camp, but on the opposite side of the river.

The crisis of the campaign was now come. So long 1704.
as the enemy were united to the south of the river, while the Allies remained divided on opposite sides of it, each of the Allied divisions was exposed to a grave risk of being crushed by overwhelming numbers: but Marlborough could not cross the Danube to join Eugene without losing his hold on Bavaria, and Eugene could not come southwards to effect a junction with the English without jeopardising the Allied line of communications and supplies. Moreover, it was only reasonable to suppose that the French would be in no hurry to offer battle, if confronted by the united forces of their enemies: yet it was upon the chance of compelling an engagement that the success of Marlborough's operations would now depend. Such doubts as the Allied commanders may have entertained, however, were speedily dispelled by the movements of the French. On August 9, upon receipt of intelligence that the enemy were marching towards the Danube, Marlborough also advanced in that direction, in order that he too might cross the river, should they do so. A few hours later he received tidings that Tallard and the Elector were crossing the river in full march on Eugene's position, tidings which were coupled with an urgent appeal for reinforcements from the Prince himself. The help for which Eugene asked was at once supplied, and the same evening the whole of Marlborough's army began to file across the Danube and the tributary streams which separated them from Eugene, with whose forces they successfully joined hands some forty-eight hours later. The intention of the Allied commanders was now to encamp around the village of Blenheim, a spot about midway between their own position and the place where the enemy had crossed the river; and on the following morning they rode Aug. 12.
forward in company to reconnoitre. They were delighted to find that the ground was already occupied by Tallard's troops. True, the position was a good

1704. one, and Tallard could muster some 60,000 men against the 52,000 in the Allied ranks; but here at last was a fair opportunity of forcing on a battle, and it would



BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

A. Prince Eugene.
B. Marlborough.
C. Lord Cutts.
D. Elector of Bavaria.
E. Marsin.
F. Tallard.

have required greater odds than these to induce Marlborough to let it slip.

The French camp was pitched at the top of a gradual slope, about a mile in length and entirely destitute of cover. The Elector was quartered on the left, which

rested on the woods and ravines round the village of Lutzingen; the centre, where Marsin was stationed, was occupied by the bulk of the cavalry of the French and Bavarian armies; whilst the village of Blenheim on the right had been selected by Tallard for his own headquarters. Between this camp and the Allied army lay some miles of country full of ravines, streams, swamps, and other obstacles to the advance of an armed force; and Tallard was confident that no general would dare to attack an army such as his, which combined with strength of position and superiority of numbers the prestige of nearly half a century of unbroken success. Rising early on the morning of August 13, the French Marshal sat in his tent, writing home that he had news of the Allies being astir betimes that day, and he supposed that they were already preparing to take themselves off. Scarcely was the ink dry on his paper when on a sudden the river mist of early morning rolled away, and there in front of him, in full march on the French camp, the Allied army was tramping along. At sight of a spectacle so utterly unexpected a moment of panic ensued in the French ranks —troops hurriedly mustering, guns firing, foraging parties scampering home, and aides-de-camp dashing hither and thither to carry orders or to obtain them. Tallard, recovering from his surprise, scanned the advancing lines to locate the English troops, for he knew that the fray was like to be hottest where the red-coats were; and finding that they were to be employed against his own wing, he hastened to pour his choicest troops into the village of Blenheim, to line the hedges round it, and to post his guns in front. This done, he bethought him that Marsin was untried in high command, and galloped away to see how things were faring with him. 1704.

Meanwhile the Allied army had steadily continued its advance, and by eight o'clock Marlborough was prepared to strike whenever Eugene should be ready.

1704. After prayers had been read at the head of each regiment to the accompaniment of an ineffectual fire from Tallard's guns, "the Duke mounted and rode down the whole length of his line. As he passed, a round shot struck the ground under his horse and covered him with dust. For a moment every man held his breath, but in a few seconds the calm figure with the red coat and the broad blue ribbon reappeared, the horse moving slowly and quietly as before, and the handsome face unchangeably serene."[1] And then at last, after a weary wait of five long hours, an officer galloped up to say that Eugene was ready and the battle could begin. The signal given, the Allied lines at once advanced towards the swampy ground before them, through which a little stream, the Nebel, filtered down to lose itself in the great river. On the right, where the Elector had moved down to the edge of the stream to hamper his enemy's passage, Eugene's cavalry could gain no footing on the further bank, and though the Prince himself led his men with the reckless courage for which he was famed, it was not until late in the afternoon that his infantry contrived to force their way across and sweep the Bavarians back. Meanwhile in the centre the main body under Marlborough had been floundering through the swamp, harassed the while by the enemy's fire, and scarcely given time to deploy on firm ground beyond before Tallard's horse came thundering down on them. Opposite Blenheim, however, the red-coats had made short work of the passage of the stream, and a furious fight was raging round the village. The Duke's orders were that the men were to reserve their fire till the palisade was reached, and were then to pour in a volley at close quarters and carry the village at the bayonet's point; but he soon perceived that, despite the fury of the attack, the village could only be carried, if carried at all, at a price which he

[1] Hon. J. W. Fortescue, "History of the British Army," vol. i. p. 436.

would not pay. Leaving Cutts, therefore, to keep the troops in Blenheim occupied with sham attacks, he turned to the centre of his line, to press home the attack in that quarter. As soon as his men had formed up on the other side of the stream, he pushed forward his guns, with three German battalions in support, against the French centre, which, as he knew, was composed of raw foot and mixed bodies of horse. The untrained French infantry regiments stood pluckily under the fire of the guns, and might have continued to hold their own if the squadrons beside them had charged, as Tallard commanded; but the cavalry would not stir, and the foot broke and fled before a charge of the Allied horse. A great gap was thus made in the French ranks, and, before Tallard could close it, Marlborough's cavalry had charged once again and broken the whole French line into hopeless confusion. The victory was crushingly complete. Of Tallard's infantry 11,000 men, the flower of the armies of France, were cut off in the village of Blenheim, unable either to escape or to fight; the whole of the cavalry, caught in a trap between the Danube, the swamps, and a victorious enemy, were killed, captured, or driven into the river; and out of the 60,000 troops who had faced the Allies so proudly at the beginning of the day there remained at night but 20,000 men, fleeing for their lives with the Elector at their head. 1704.

So another name had been added to the roll of victories which had opened with Crécy, and was to close with Waterloo; nor was it the only triumph by which that year was marked. A few days before the battle of Blenheim was fought, an English fleet under Rooke had pounced upon and captured Gibraltar. The capture effected, Rooke sailed away, leaving some 2,000 marines on the Rock, who found themselves besieged by 12,000 French and Spanish troops almost before they had had time to repair the fortifications. This disparity of numbers was presently increased still July 22.

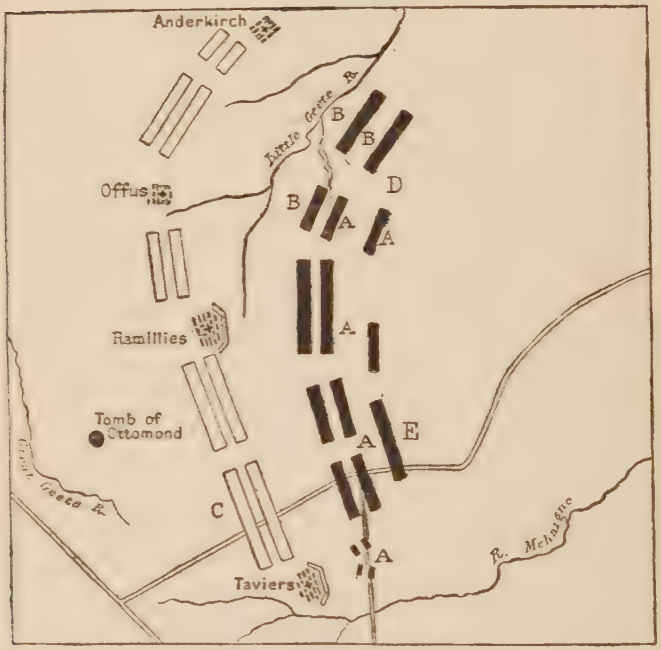
1705. further by the arrival of another 4,000 men in the besiegers' camp; and the enemy, emboldened by a breach they had made in one of the chief defences of the fortress, determined upon a general assault. The attack was delivered on February 7, 1705, and the attacking force, sweeping out of the breach the few English troops they found there, rushed triumphantly on to the main gate, where the only obstacle to their advance was a guard of seventeen men under a captain named Fisher. Fisher and his men, upon whom the safety of the Rock now depended, fought with the greatest gallantry, and, being at last reinforced by men from neighbouring posts, succeeded finally in driving the enemy out again through the breach by which they had entered. Disheartened by this reverse, and by the defeat of their fleet which soon afterwards followed it, the besiegers abandoned the
April. siege; and Gibraltar, the sentinel of the Mediterranean, remained secure in English hands.

In the meantime the Duke of Marlborough had been preparing for another campaign in which to reap the fruits of his victory at Blenheim. He hoped to carry the war into Lorraine early in the year, but was still waiting at Treves for the reinforcements which his Imperial and German allies had promised him when he was recalled to the Meuse by an urgent summons
June. from the Dutch: Villeroy, they sent word, was on the move, and Liège was in danger. On receipt of this intelligence Marlborough got his army into motion as speedily as possible, whereupon the French retired quickly from Liège to the shelter of their fortified lines. Upon these lines, which were naturally of considerable strength, Villeroy had spent three years of assiduous toil; and the army with which he now held them enjoyed a decided superiority in numbers over the force under the Duke's command. So skilful were Marlborough's manœuvres, however, that, before three weeks were over, Villeroy, ousted from his chosen

position, had been sent off in quest of another refuge behind the Dyle: and it was only to the interference of the Dutch generals and deputies that he owed his escape at all. Realising how cheaply they had been let off, the French began to pluck up heart again, persuading themselves that Marlborough was no general and Blenheim only "a happy accident." With this comforting reflection they betook themselves to winter quarters to await the next campaign, in which they were to find that the Duke was still in luck, and that another and not less "happy accident" was to mark his good fortune. 1705. July 18.

Marlborough spent the winter, according to his custom, in consultation with his Queen and Government at home, and in visits to the more important members of the Coalition abroad. On his return to the Low Countries in the spring of 1706, he found that Villeroy still lay secure in his old position behind the Dyle; and it seemed improbable that he could be induced to leave it. As the Dutch Deputies had at last been muzzled, and he was now free to conduct operations in accordance with his own views, Marlborough's delight was great when in the middle of May he received information that the French had broken up their camp, and were marching on Judoigne. The Allied army at once moved off to attack; and early in the morning of Whitsunday, May 23, the opposing armies were both marching through dense fog over the table-land round the village of Ramillies. Villeroy knew that the Allies were coming, but had not expected them so soon; so he was unpleasantly surprised when the fog lifted about ten o'clock, and showed him that they were already close upon him. He was familiar with the ground, however, and so was able to select a position without loss of time. The table-land which he had reached was intersected by three streams, the Mehaigne, the Great Geete, and the Little Geete, which, like the Nebel at Blenheim, con- 1706.

1706. verted into swamp and marsh the land along their banks. On the undulating ground between them lay four villages in a semi-circle, Taviers and Anderkirch forward on the wings, Ramillies and Offus closer to-



BATTLE OF RAMILLIES

A. Allies. *C.* Maison du Roi.
B. British. *D.* Marlborough.
E. Overkirk.

gether at the back; and these Villeroy occupied in force, with his left, consisting largely of cavalry, posted behind the Little Geete, with the bulk of his infantry

between Offus and Ramillies in the centre, and with his right, which extended as far as Taviers, strengthened by the presence of the *Maison du Roi*, the most dashing cavalry brigade in his or any other army. 1706.

The defects of such dispositions as these did not escape the eyes of the Duke. He saw that a turning movement directed against the French right could only be parried by a rapid concentration of troops at Taviers, and that such a manœuvre was rendered extremely difficult of accomplishment by the remoteness of that village and by the fact that the greater part of the French horse was comparatively useless in the position in which they had been placed behind the Little Geete marshes. So it was on the French right that the brunt of the battle was to fall; but to mask the real design, the Allied lines marched away for a feint attack on Anderkirch, and halting on the banks of the Geete, ostentatiously prepared for an assault. Marking the advance of the English regiments against his left, and dreading their onslaught, as Tallard had done at Blenheim, the French Marshal addressed himself with feverish haste to the task of reinforcing his threatened wing; and one after another his battalions were withdrawn from Taviers and Ramillies, and hurriedly transferred to the other end of his line. As the white coats approached their new positions, Marlborough, as though daunted by Villeroy's tactics, withdrew his right from the banks of the Geete onto a ridge of rising ground which at that point looked across the river towards Anderkirch. Over the ridge and out of sight the Allied troops began to march, until the last ranks, as they mounted the crest, faced about once again, crowning the ridge with that line of scarlet which was the terror of every French general. It was not by the regiments that lined the ridge, however, that that day's battle was to be won. Beyond the ridge, and out of sight of the French, the bulk of Marlborough's army was fast streaming away towards

1706. the other wing, where the real attack was to be delivered, and where the Dutch were already engaged. Their horse, though led by the veteran Overkirk, had been no match for the *Maison du Roi*, who had not only repelled their charge, but had well-nigh captured the Duke himself, who had hurried in person to the rescue. The Dutch infantry had met with better success, had cleared the village of Taviers, though it offered a stout resistance, and leaving it in the hands of the Danish horse, had pressed on to occupy a knoll called the Tomb of Ottomond in the rear of the French lines. This knoll was the key of the position, and the French were now exposed to a combined assault in front, flank, and rear. Long before Villeroy could reinforce them, the *Maison du Roi* were cut to pieces, the rest of the French cavalry on that wing dispersed, and their infantry from Taviers to Ramillies swept back or destroyed; whereupon the English on the ridge, no longer to be restrained, rushed down across the swamps in front of them, and by turning Villeroy's left at Anderkirch, completed the disorder of his army. The results of the battle, direct and indirect, were such as might have been expected from the completeness of the victory. The losses of the French on the field and in the subsequent pursuit amounted to 15,000 men killed, wounded, and captured, and fifty guns, eighty standards, and all their baggage taken: and by the end of September the lines of the Dyle, Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp, Ostend, Menin, Dendermond, and Ath were in Marlborough's hands, and Flanders and Brabant were cleared of French troops.

A great effort was now demanded from the armies of France, if the war, which had already reached her gates, was not to be carried into the heart of her territory; but whilst the councils of the Alliance were distracted by dissensions over which even the skill and patience of Marlborough could not prevail, the hopes of Louis were revived by the victory which now graced his flag at

Almanza. By dint of recalling troops from Italy and the Rhine, Louis contrived to get together 100,000 men in Flanders by the end of May, who were to be 1708. commanded in name by the Duke of Burgundy, but in fact by Vendôme, a soldier of ability and experience. Marlborough, whose own numbers fell short of this total by at least 20,000, centred his hopes on the arrival of Eugene's army; but Imperial forces were rarely ready when needed, and as the weeks slipped by, they brought no Eugene with them. It was not till July that the Prince appeared, and even then he came without his army. Nevertheless, his arrival was exceedingly opportune. Bruges and Ghent had opened their gates to the French; the line of the Scheldt lay open before them; Brussels had gone crazy with terror; and the Duke, already exhausted by incessant anxiety and fatigue, was for the moment prostrated by a severe attack of fever. Cheered by the Prince's presence, Marlborough roused himself to face the crisis. Despite his marked inferiority in numbers and the danger of uncovering the panic-stricken capital, he decided with characteristic audacity to strike a blow for the protection of Oudenarde, the key to the line of the Scheldt, which was now threatened by the enemy; and the Allied army, called out early in the morning of July 9 to perform one of those feats which no troops will accomplish at the bidding of any but a beloved and trusted chief, had covered some sixty hours later the fifty miles of heavy road that had separated it from its goal. Even so they had advanced none too speedily, for the greater part of them had still to cross the Scheldt when the French appeared on the scene. Seeing at how great a disadvantage an army thus divided might be taken, Vendôme urged an immediate attack; but fortunately for the Allies he was overruled by the Duke of Burgundy, who, being greatly disconcerted by the unlooked-for presence of the enemy, decided to fall back upon a position at some distance from the river. This

1708. delay was fatal to the French, for the whole of the Allied forces was safely across the Scheldt when eventually at a late hour of the afternoon Burgundy and Vendôme advanced to offer battle. It is probable that with a few hours more daylight Marlborough could have won a victory which would have ended the war. Even as it was, the French right was cut off and destroyed; and the rest of their army owed its escape to the darkness which combined with the fatigue of Marlborough's troops to make pursuit impossible.

The battle of Oudenarde encouraged the English Government to persevere in a scheme, with which they had already trifled, for organising an incursion into Normandy, and thereby subjecting Louis' own territories to the miseries of war. The capture of Lille, however, was deemed indispensable to the success of such a project, and to this task Marlborough and Eugene were now required to address themselves. The difficulties of the undertaking were very great. In the first place, it was necessary that the whole of the cumbrous machinery which was indispensable to a besieging army at that period should be brought overland from Brussels, a distance of close upon eighty miles, involving the passage of two rivers—a feat which, in any case considerable, must involve grave hazard when accomplished in the face of a large hostile force. Moreover, Lille, a place of great natural strength, was thought to be among the masterpieces of Vauban's engineering skill; it was garrisoned by 15,000 men under the tried and trusted veteran, Boufflers; and it was certain that no effort would be spared on the part of France to preserve the key of her frontier and one of the glories of her land. So consummate, however, was the genius with which the operations[1] of the besiegers were conducted that

[1] The reader will not have forgotten that many of these operations, including the brilliant little victory of General Webb at Wynendale, have been described by a master hand in the pages of "Esmond."

Lille, invested on August 13, surrendered to the Allies on December 9. Bruges and Ghent promptly followed suit: and the news of these triumphs was proclaimed in England on the day on which she learned that by the capture of Sardinia and Minorca she had won her first foothold in the Mediterranean Sea. 1708. Sept. 1708.

As the British Parliament was induced to loosen its purse-strings by the exhilarating effects of Oudenarde and Lille, the Allies had received some timely reinforcements when they came out of winter quarters for the campaign of 1709. Towards the middle of June they encamped to the south of Lille, desiring, if possible, to transfer the theatre of war further within the boundaries of France. Before them lay Villars, heavily entrenched, and intent on the protection of the great fortresses of Tournay and Mons, which had been rendered doubly precious by the loss of Lille. But Villars was no match for his astute opponent, as events were soon to show. As soon as he was ready to begin operations, Marlborough ostentatiously prepared for an assault on the French lines, and Villars in alarm hurriedly recalled to his aid the large force he had told off for the defence of Tournay. This force rejoined Villars on June 26. That evening the order went round in the Allied camp to strike tents and march, and the men fell in, believing that the work before them was an attack on the formidable entrenchments of the French, and wondering whether this were not a task beyond the powers even of their incomparable chief. So they marched away, grim and resolute, in the growing darkness; but not in the direction they anticipated. The cold light of dawn showed them, to their no small surprise, that they had quietly invested Tournay, which could not now by any possibility be either reinforced or relieved. Tournay surrendered on July 23; and on October 9 Mons also opened its gates, Villars' desperate effort to relieve it having been foiled on the bloody field of Malplaquet. With these 1709. Sept. 11.

successes the war virtually came to an end: "God be praised," wrote Marlborough from the battlefield, "it is now in our power to have what peace we please."

England cuts but a sorry figure in the protracted and tortuous negotiations which resulted in the Peace
1713. of Utrecht, but her gains were very great. She acquired or retained possession of Gibraltar and Minorca in the Mediterranean; of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Hudson's Bay in North America; and of that portion of St. Christopher in the West Indies which was not already her own. Dunkirk, the refuge of the privateers who had battened on her commerce, was to be dismantled; the Protestant Succession was recognised; and the expulsion of the Pretender from France was guaranteed. Moreover, the Peace assured to her, by what was known as the Assiento contract, the lucrative monopoly of the trade in slaves with the colonial possessions of Spain. These were Imperial and commercial gains of immense value, and they were the direct result of Marlborough's campaigns. Indirectly also his genius had borne still further fruit in "the gain to England of that unequalled sea power which started ahead during the War of the League of Augsburg, and received its completeness and seal during that of the Spanish Succession. By it she controlled the great commerce of the open sea with a military shipping that had no rival, and in the exhausted condition of the other nations could have none; and that shipping was now securely based on strong positions in all the disputed quarters of the world."[1]

[1] Captain Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon History," p. 223.

Texel
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OLDENBURG
MUNSTER
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Amsterdam
Leyden
The Hague
Utrecht
Hastenbeck
UNITED NETHERLANDS
Ostend
Bruges
Antwerp
Dunkirk
Ghent
Menin
Oudenarde
Ath
Brussels
Lille
Tournay
Mons
Ramillies
Malplaquet
AUSTRIAN NETHERLANDS
LIEGE
JULICH
BERG
Aix-la-Chapelle
Liege
R. Meuse
R. Rhine
TREVES
Treves
R. Moselle
PALATINATE
SAXONY
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CHAPTER IV

THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR: AMERICA

European relations: another war inevitable—The situation in America—Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia—George Washington's mission—He fires the first shot—General Braddock—Braddock's disaster—Acadia—The capture of Fort Beauséjour—William Johnson's advance on Canada—He defeats Baron Dieskau—Admiral Byng and the loss of Minorca—British disasters—William Pitt takes office—Louisburg—The laird of Laverawe—Abercrombie's advance—Ticonderoga—Montcalm's anxieties—Wolfe sails for Quebec—Protracted operations—The night attack—The Plains of Abraham—Death of Wolfe—The conquest of Canada—England: fear of invasion—Boscawen's naval victory—Hawke and Conflans—Quiberon Bay—The end of the war.

The conclusion of peace at Utrecht was shortly followed by the deaths of the Queen of England and of the King of France, when the Elector of Hanover ascended the throne of Anne, and Philip of Orleans, in the character of Regent, grasped the sceptre which could not as yet be wielded by the infant hands of Louis XV. In the insecurity of his position at home each of these rulers had a strong motive for avoiding hostilities abroad; and their pacific inclinations were shared to the full by their ministers, Walpole and Fleuri. But there can be no abiding peace when the policy of the governors runs counter to the interests and the instincts of the governed, and no statesmanship could indefinitely postpone the coming of a fresh Imperial dispute. It was an intolerable injury to the proud spirit of Spain that Gibraltar and Port Mahon should remain in English hands; nor was her sense of injury soothed by the proceedings of the English in her

colonial possessions, where under cover of the Assiento contract they had established an immense smuggling trade which they were scarcely at the pains to disguise. The English traders, on the other hand, seem to have supposed that a long career of unscrupulous adventure had conferred upon them a prescriptive license for commercial illegality, and the attempts of the Spanish authorities to keep them within the bounds of treaties resulted in frequent scenes of recrimination and violence. England declared war upon Spain in 1739, their quarrel being soon merged in the general convulsion of Europe brought about by Frederick of Prussia's invasion of Silesia. In this war, the War of the Austrian Succession, Great Britain appeared as the ally of Austria, while France had already taken sides as the auxiliary of Spain; in effect, therefore, it amounted to a resumption of the contest interrupted at Utrecht: but the
1748. Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which brought it to a close, put no end to the burning questions by which the conflagration had been produced. So far as England and France were concerned it could be at best but an armed truce, for both in India and in America it left them as it found them, face to face. In America, when the struggle should come, the combatants would meet on fairly level terms, for the one great advantage of the British colonists, their numerical superiority, was counterbalanced by many sources of weakness. With the exception of a few hardy backwoodsmen along the frontiers of the West, the British colonists were a peaceful and unadventurous folk, absorbed in commercial or agricultural pursuits, without desire for empire or taste or ability for war: and the scattered Colonies in which they dwelt devoted to fierce jealousy of one another all the energy that could be spared from hatred of the mother-country. Canada, on the other hand, though poor in all but furs, was rich in what her rivals lacked: her military government could count upon her unquestioning support; and her population, small though

was, consisted of a race of soldiers eager for the profit and pleasure of war, and unmatched for skill and daring in the irregular warfare of the woods.

To understand the story of the fight for Canada, the reader must bear in mind that at the time of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle the British Colonies were still confined to a narrow strip of sea-board between the Atlantic and the Alleghanies.[1] Behind the mountains lay the mighty forest, trackless, immeasurable, untenanted save by wandering Indian tribes; and through it ran a great chain of water-ways—the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Lakes. The line of this water-way was of supreme importance both to England and to France, since its possession by England would sever Canada from the settlements of France in the South, whilst its possession by France would preclude for ever the possibility of British extension to the West. The key to it was the valley of the Ohio, which the French had always vaguely claimed on the pretext of early exploration, and which they now designed to occupy effectively. Fortunately for the British, they possessed at this juncture an ardent champion in the person of Dinwiddie, the Governor of Virginia, who was resolved that he at all events would not allow the aggression of the enemy to pass unchallenged; and on hearing that the French were busy building forts on the Ohio, he despatched a letter to their commander, requiring his immediate withdrawal from the territories of the King of England. The bearer of the missive, a young Virginian officer called George Washington, reached his destination in safety, and was courteously entertained; but he was sent back to Dinwiddie with a reply in which the Frenchman intimated clearly that he meant to stay where he was until his own Government told him to retire. It was too late for Dinwiddie to take any further steps that season; but as soon as the forests were again released from the grip of winter, he sent

1748.

1752–1753.

Dec. 1753.

[1] A map of North America will be found facing p. 180.

1754. forward a building party of his own to the Ohio, supported by Washington and a body of militia, with orders to oppose force with force. On arriving at a trading outpost in the wilderness known as the Great Meadows, Washington was informed that the enemy were advancing in force to clear the country, the news being shortly afterwards confirmed by the report of a friendly Indian, who had detected their advance guard in hiding near the British camp. Guided by the Indian, Washington at once set out to surprise this detachment before the main body should arrive. As soon as they perceived the British, the French sprang up, weapons in hand; thereupon at a word from Washington the British poured in a volley; the French commander, Jumonville, and nine of his men fell; the rest were captured. A few weeks later, however, Washington in his turn was caught at Great Meadows by a large force of French and Indians, and was compelled to surrender after a fight of nine hours' duration in which a fourth of his men were killed or wounded.

Poor Dinwiddie was sorely grieved by this misfortune, but was presently consoled by news that the home Government, roused by his appeals, had ordered two regiments of regulars to proceed to America with General Braddock in command. With this accession of strength the sanguine Governor looked forward to the speedy capture of the post which the French had established under the name of Fort Duquêsne; but he would have been less elated had he known how utterly unfitted was Braddock for the task which awaited him. No one could deny that Braddock was an excellent parade-ground officer, a strict disciplinarian, and a man of undaunted courage: but other qualities were required in a leader who "was going with a handful of men to conquer whole nations, to do which they must cut their way through unknown woods." His first step
April 1755. on reaching America was to meet the Governors in council, to settle a plan of campaign; and with them

he arranged that, while sundry minor operations should 1755.
be entrusted to subordinate officers, the main task of capturing Fort Duquêsne should be reserved for himself. Towards that place, therefore, about the beginning of June his army set out. The route which he selected traversed a hundred miles of almost impenetrable forest, and at the end of eight days of arduous toil the army had advanced rather less than thirty miles; but the men were already stricken with fever, and the horses dropping from want of forage. On the advice of Washington, who was on the staff, the General then decided to leave his heavy baggage behind, and to push on with about 1,200 picked troops, a few guns, and the necessary transport. Even so matters were not much mended, for Braddock, to Washington's disgust, still insisted upon halting "to level every mole-hill and to erect bridges over every brook": in the course of the next four days, accordingly, the column covered no more than twelve miles.

At length on July 7 they approached the banks of a tributary stream about eight miles from the spot where Fort Duquêsne stood guard over the junction of the Alleghany and the Monongahela. From this point to the fort there were two routes, of which the more direct led through difficult and dangerous country, and the longer, although on the whole the easier, involved a double passage of the river. Preferring the river to the hills, Braddock selected the latter course, and gave orders for an early start on the following morning; but as usual his progress was slow, and it was past midday when the army reached the second ford. Expecting that his passage of the river would be opposed, Braddock had sent forward a strong advance guard to clear the opposite bank; but no enemy appeared, and to the immense satisfaction of the General the troops marched through the shallows, their flags flying and drums beating, with all the pomp and splendour of parade-ground drill. On the further bank a brief halt

1755. was called; then, with Indian and Virginian scouts in front and detached parties thrown out to right and left, the force plunged once again into the gloomy depths of the forest.

At some distance from the second ford the route by which the column was advancing crossed a broad ravine choked with the tangled growth of the forest. The advance guard under Lieutenant-Colonel Gage had successfully forced their way across the hollow, and the main body was on the point of entering it, when the skirmishers in front suddenly fell back, and an engineer engaged upon the road, looking up to see what was the matter, beheld a French officer in Indian dress running forward, waving his hat over his head. Behind him, invisible to the British, lay concealed a French force about 1,000 strong; and the moment his signal was given, the forest resounded with the yells of Indians and the crackle of musketry fire from behind the trees. The surprise was complete; not a man among the enemy except their commander could be seen; but Gage's men, deploying with admirable steadiness, began to fire by volleys into the trees in front of them. At the third volley the French commander fell, whereupon the Canadian militia took to their heels, and even the Indians showed signs of panic. As Gage had by this time brought a couple of guns into action, the French officers made up their minds that the day was lost; but the French regulars stood firm, holding the British in check, and restoring the confidence of their Indian allies.

To right and left of the British column the Indians now swarmed away into the forest, until every tree and bush and rock and hollow concealed its marksman; and with these yelling warriors once fairly launched against them, the doom of the red-coats was sealed. Gage's men lost their nerve before Braddock could join them, and, as the main body struggled forward, plunged wildly among their comrades to find a refuge from the

merciless fire. The Virginians alone made some attempt to hold their own. Familiar with the methods of Indian warfare, they had scattered among the trees, and might perhaps have stayed the havoc, if Braddock, horrified at their disregard of copy-book maxims, had not dashed among them sword in hand, and driven them back to share the carnage to which the huddled masses of regulars were exposed. For those unfortunates there was no respite from the unceasing storm of shot; the men with never a glimpse of an enemy could neither fire nor charge; the officers exposed themselves with the dauntless courage of their kind only to become the targets of unerring marksmen; and the faster they fell, the more the blind terror of their men increased. At length, when 1,000 men out of 1,300 had been killed or wounded, and of eighty-six officers engaged twenty-three alone remained unharmed, the General gave the word to retire; scarcely had the order crossed his lips when he too fell, shot through the lungs. The French were too few for pursuit, and the Indians too busy tearing from the heads of their dead or dying foes the bloody tokens of their triumph: but the terrified survivors of the slaughter needed no spur, as they sped away over the river and through the woods, to spread along the frontier their tale of shame and terror. 1755.

While Braddock's battalions were marching upon their doom on the Monongahela, a better fortune was attending the operations of another British expedition which had been despatched to Acadia. This unhappy province, originally a part of the American possessions of France, had been ceded to England at the Peace of Utrecht; and ever since that time it had been a constant object of desire to its former owners and an equally constant source of danger and vexation to its new masters. Despite a consistent leniency of treatment at the hands of the British authorities, its peasant population had stolidly refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of the King of England; indeed, the crafty (1713.)

1755. emissaries of France and Rome, playing upon their ignorance and superstition, had contrived more than once to incite them to open rebellion. At the time with which our narrative is concerned many of the Acadians had been constrained by their priests to abandon their old homes in the English portion of the province, and had settled just across the border around the French fort at Beauséjour. But they were reluctant exiles whose longing gaze would often revert to those smiling homesteads where they had dwelt in plenty and in peace; so that their presence at Beauséjour was a perpetual menace to the small British population of the province. Fortunately for the latter, however, the safety of Acadia was a question in which the New England colonists were also deeply concerned; Shirley, the Governor of Massachusetts, had suggested to Lawrence, who had charge of Acadia, that the capture of the French fort might be regarded as a necessary measure of self-defence; and his Assembly, when let into the secret, had responded nobly with votes of money and of men.

Early in the month of April, 1755, the New England levies mustered at Boston, where clothing and blankets awaited them; but the muskets with which they were to be armed had not arrived from England, and the
May 22. month of May was well advanced before the expedition could start. Reaching the Bay of Fundy on June 1, they were allowed to land unopposed within five miles of Beauséjour; the regulars from Fort Lawrence then joined them; and the whole force, marching up to the fort, opened a leisurely siege. It had not been long in progress when a fortunate accident brought it to an unexpected end. On the morning of the 16th a number of French officers were seated at breakfast in "what they called their bomb-proof" when a shell came crashing through the armour, killing six of them and wounding many others. Vergor, the commandant of the place, was in the next "bomb-proof" at the time,

and was so much terrified lest he should become the victim of a similar catastrophe, that he promptly hoisted a white flag—to the no small surprise of the besiegers. The work of the expedition was then accomplished; and Acadia, cleared of the unhappy peasants who had so often disturbed her peace, lay passive in the grasp of Britain. 1755.

In addition to the expedition against Beauséjour, the New England legislatures had also voted a column for an attack upon the French post of Crown Point on Lake Champlain, whose fortunes we must now follow. At first sight the force did not appear very imposing: the men had neither training nor discipline, and many of them were destitute of the ordinary equipment of a soldier; whilst the General, William Johnson, owed his appointment rather to his influence over the wayward Iroquois tribes among whom he dwelt than to any knowledge of the art of war. But the recruits came of a sturdy stock, and Johnson, though inexperienced, was enterprising and ambitious, and was soon able to make himself as popular with Puritan officers as he had always been with Indian braves. "Went on about four or five miles," runs an officer's journal, "then stopped, . . . and drank some fresh lemon-punch and the best of wine with General Johnson." "Stopped about noon," he continues on the morrow, "and dined with General Johnson by a small brook under a tree; ate a good dinner of cold boiled and roast venison; drank good fresh lemon-punch and wine." How different from the insolent superiority of the English officer: how welcome such amenities as a set-off against the rough routine of the frontier camp!

Johnson's base of operations was Fort Lyman, afterwards better known under the name of Fort Edward. He himself encamped in an indifferent position at the southernmost extremity of the lake which he re-named Lake George in honour of his sovereign; and here he was joined by his Mohawk warriors to the number of

1755. about 300. In the meantime the French had received notice of his design from the papers captured from Braddock; and Baron Dieskau, the officer entrusted with the defence of Crown Point, had already occupied the promontory of Ticonderoga, which commanded the junction of Lakes George and Champlain, by one or other of which the British must necessarily advance. Dieskau was still waiting for them to attack him when a prisoner was brought in, who asserted that Johnson's main force had retired to Albany, and that his former base at Fort Lyman was now so weakly held as to be incapable of defence. As the prisoner expected, Dieskau, who had 1,500 men with him at Ticonderoga, tumbled headlong into the snare: nor was it till his Indians captured two British waggoners near Fort Lyman that he discovered that Johnson's army was still encamped at the end of the lake. Soon afterwards his scouts brought in word that a British column was advancing; whereupon the French and Indians ensconced themselves in the dense thickets through which the road passed, to prepare a welcome for the enemy.

The advancing force consisted of a party of Colonials and Mohawks sent out by Johnson, who had been informed by the companions of the captured waggoners that a French force was at hand. For some unaccountable reason no precautions had been taken against surprise, and presently the whole body marched calm and undisturbed into the jaws of Dieskau's death-trap. A Mohawk chieftain, Hendrick, an old and cunning warrior, had indeed begun to grow suspicious, but it was already too late; volley after volley came pouring into them; scores of them fell, including Williams, their commander, and old Hendrick himself; and the rest recoiled, retiring towards the camp. There all was in confusion, for no one had ever thought of being attacked; and had Dieskau charged briskly on the heels of the fugitives, he would have encountered but

a feeble resistance. Dieskau, however, trying to rally his Canadians and Indians, who had got out of hand, exposed himself within range of the camp, and fell, severely wounded; seeing which, the Indians ran off, compelling the whole French force to retire in confusion. Johnson's men had fought steadily and well, in spite of their inexperience and the cunning of the enemy; and the captured French General, who had imbibed the Canadian contempt for New England soldiers, wrote from the British camp that he had revised his estimate of their value: "In the morning," he said, "they fight like good boys, about noon like men, and in the afternoon like devils." With troops who could extort such praise from a pupil of Marshal Saxe, Johnson should have pursued the fugitive French, whose plight had become desperate, and should have pressed on against their half-empty fort at Ticonderoga. As it was, he did absolutely nothing; and the Crown Point expedition remained "a failure disguised under an incidental success." In the meantime a fourth expedition against Niagara had failed miserably; and as a result of Braddock's disaster a storm of blood and fire had burst upon the frontiers of the West. 1755.

While these events were in progress, England and France had remained nominally at peace, but an end was put to the farce by the former's declaration of war on May 18, 1756. Her action seemed to result only in making her disasters more numerous and more crushing than they had been before, for her imbecile Government, terrified by threats of invasion, had sat down for twelve months under the certainty of war without taking a single step for the defence of her possessions beyond the sea. When a French fleet and army appeared off Minorca in April, nearly all the senior officers of the garrison were absent on leave, and the French guns had begun to produce an effect on the defences of Port Mahon before the tardy arrival of an ill-equipped British fleet under Admiral Byng. Byng 1756.

1756. sighted the enemy's fleet on the morning of May 20, and, being then to windward, ran down to battle; but as he advanced, the sixth ship in his line, some of her spars being shot away, became unmanageable and flew up into the wind. Being afraid to go on, either because the injured vessel had thrown back the rest of the line, or because one of his colleagues had been court-martialled for a technical fault in breaking the line under similar circumstances, the Admiral considered that it was impossible for him to force on a decisive engagement; and the French on their part had no desire to fight, provided they could keep the British fleet from Port Mahon. Byng withdrew after the action, and on June 28 Port Mahon surrendered. The news of the disaster was greeted in England with a storm of popular indignation, and "Byng was shot because Newcastle [the Prime Minister] deserved to be hanged." But it was easier for the Government to shoot its admirals than to stem the flood of disasters which its incompetence had made inevitable; and still, as the ships sailed home from East and West, the tales of evil multiplied fast. In Europe, it was true, the ally of England, King Frederick of Prussia, was holding his own, with a courage and skill that seemed superhuman, against the circle of giant foes who ringed him in; but England could claim little credit for his successes, and her own

July 26, 1757. General, the Duke of Cumberland, defeated at Hastenbeck, had capitulated to the French. Even worse was the news from America, where a British attempt on

July 1757. Louisburg had hopelessly failed, while the new French

August 1756. commander, Montcalm, had struck two deadly blows in the destruction of Shirley's fort at Oswego and of

July 1757. Johnson's on Lake George, where many of the prisoners had been murdered by Montcalm's Indian allies. Worst of all was the terrible tale which came from India of

June 1756. the fall of Calcutta and the tragedy of the Black Hole. Then, when the national fortunes were at their lowest

ebb, William Pitt was called to office; and England, roused by his magic touch, awoke from a night of shame to a noonday of unexampled glory.

Soon after Pitt's recall to power came the welcome news that the battle of Plassey had, as will presently be told, banished all anxiety on the score of India, whilst Frederick, fresh from his victories at Rossbach and Leuthen, might be relied upon to involve France still more deeply in the Continental war upon which much of her energy had already been misspent. The new Minister was therefore able to devote his attention almost exclusively to America; and British regiments prepared to cross the seas, while British squadrons patrolled the coasts of France, to block the way of her fleets and armies to the scene of the projected operations. Those operations were to comprise attacks on Canada wherever a vulnerable point presented itself. While Abercrombie and Lord Howe advanced against Crown Point, and Brigadier-General Forbes renewed the attempt against Fort Duquêsne, Boscawen and Amherst were to proceed by sea against Louisburg, by the capture of which fortress a way into the very heart of Canada would be thrown open. Pitt had 1758.
hoped that Louisburg might be reduced early enough in the season to allow Amherst's army to co-operate with Abercrombie's in an attack on Quebec; but as the month of May drew to a close, Boscawen's fleet still lay at anchor at Halifax, waiting for the General, who had not yet arrived. On the 28th Boscawen at last made up his mind to start without his colleague, and he was actually on his way to Louisburg when the General's ship was sighted. On June 2 the flotilla, consisting of 31 ships of war and of transports carrying 11,000 regular troops and 500 colonial rangers, dropped anchor in Louisburg bay. That afternoon Amherst put off in a boat to reconnoitre, with results which cannot have been very cheering to him, for along the rock-girt coast before him the ocean waves lashed

1758. themselves unceasingly into a fury of surf and spray, and such accessible points as he could discover were strongly guarded by the enemy. For the greater part of a week the ships lay tossing and straining at their cables, with never a break in the line of surf or a lull in the deep roar of the waves; but at last, towards the evening of the 7th, the sea began to grow calmer, and Amherst gave orders that the troops should hold themselves in readiness to embark.

June 8. At dawn on the morrow, to the accompaniment of a brisk cannonade from the frigates, the British were descried pulling for the shore. To distract the enemy, they proceeded in three divisions, of which only one was to make a serious attempt to land: it was led by a sickly youth armed with a cane, with whose name of James Wolfe the French in Canada were to become more familiar before the war was over. Besides being washed by the eternal surf, the crescent-shaped beach for which Wolfe was making could be swept from end to end by the fire of hidden trenches, and the storm of shot which burst upon the boats as they neared the shore was so severe that Wolfe waved his hand, to order the men back. In the meanwhile, however, some of his subordinates at the further end of the bay had found a little spit of beach which was sheltered from the gun-fire, and, ignoring or misinterpreting Wolfe's signal, they pulled briskly for the land. They were quickly followed by Wolfe himself, who managed to land his whole detachment on the little beach; and although the British paid a heavy toll to the angry sea in boats, muskets, and men, they were numerous enough to drive back the enemy, whose retreat they threatened to cut off. Except in so far as the sea was concerned, there was now no further obstacle to the disembarkation of Amherst's army, which was accordingly proceeded with; and on July 26, after a stubborn resistance, the commander of the French fortress agreed to capitulate. The French fleet

which had lain in the harbour when Boscawen arrived had already been destroyed, in part by the British guns, in part by the British blue-jackets, and in part by the French themselves, whilst the fall of Louisburg involved the loss of the whole of Cape Breton and Prince Edward's Island. The results of the expedition, therefore, were such as Amherst and Boscawen might well rest satisfied with; but they could not satisfy the ardent spirit of Wolfe, craving for an instant advance up the St. Lawrence, to lend Abercrombie a hand in the conquest of Canada. Wolfe little thought that Quebec was the last place in the continent where Abercrombie was likely to be found.

A legend relates that late one night in the first half of the eighteenth century one Duncan Campbell, the laird of an ancient Scottish castle on the banks of the Awe, sat alone in his hall when he was roused from the reverie into which he had fallen by a wild knocking at the gate. Hastening to the door, the laird of Inverawe beheld an unknown figure, dishevelled and red with blood, who begged for shelter: he had slain a man in a quarrel, he said, and was hotly pursued. Campbell admitted him, swearing on his dirk to shield him well. The fugitive was scarce hidden when the knocking recommenced and the officers of the law appeared, telling Campbell that his cousin Donald had been murdered, and demanding eagerly if he had seen aught of the murderer. Bound by his oath, the laird protested that he had seen no man; whereupon the pursuers hurried on, and Campbell betook himself to rest. It was but a broken sleep that awaited him, however, for in the dead of night his murdered cousin approached his bedside, and a ghostly voice addressed him thus: "Inverawe! Inverawe! Blood has been shed. Shield not the murderer." The unfortunate Campbell, who could not obey the supernatural command without breaking his plighted word, attempted to escape from his perplexities by removing the fugitive to a cave in

the mountains near by his house; but the murdered Donald would be appeased by no such compromise, and the next night the vision again appeared to the sleeping Inverawe, sternly reiterating its command. Distraught with terror, Campbell hastened to the cave at dawn of day, to bid the murderer begone; but his hiding-place was already deserted. On the third night the ghost once more aroused Campbell from his slumbers, to pronounce this strange valediction: "Farewell, Inverawe; farewell, till we meet at Ticonderoga." Campbell could learn nothing of the trysting-place, but the curious name dwelt in his mind. The years passed by, and he was serving as a major in the Black Watch, when the Seven Years' War broke out, and his regiment was ordered to America, to join Abercrombie on Lake George. There, to Campbell's dismay, he heard again on the lips of the living the ominous name of Ticonderoga, and his soul was darkened with the shadow of approaching death.

1758. In June, 1758, Abercrombie lay at the end of Lake George with an army of 15,000 men encamped around him. The force was of a size unparalleled in the annals of American warfare, and its chief, though not himself of remarkable capacity, had a skilful and energetic lieutenant in the person of his second in command, Lord Howe. Abercrombie was to advance against Montreal by way of Lake Champlain, which necessitated as a first step the capture of the French post at Ticonderoga, where Montcalm was believed to be awaiting him. The finishing touches having been put to the preparations, on July 5 the troops embarked, and the great flotilla moved off over the sparkling bosom of the lake. Landing on the morrow within a few miles of the French fort, the army was formed up in four columns for the march; but it was impossible to preserve any sort of order in the tangled intricacies of the forest, and as the confusion reached its height, the guides confessed that they had lost their way.

Towards the close of the day the main column with Lord Howe at its head blundered suddenly on to a French skirmishing party which had likewise lost its bearings in the maze of trees: the Frenchmen greeted it with a volley, and Howe fell dead. "In Lord Howe," wrote a brother officer, "the soul of General Abercrombie's army seemed to expire. From the unhappy moment the General was deprived of his advice, neither order nor discipline was observed, and a strange kind of infatuation usurped the place of resolution." 1758.

The fort of Ticonderoga stood at the head of a V-shaped peninsula at the junction of Lake Champlain and Lake George. About half a mile in rear of the fort the ground rose to a low ridge which intersected the peninsula, cutting it into a triangle of which the ridge formed the base. On this ridge Montcalm, after considerable hesitation, decided to make his final stand; and on the day after Howe's death, while Abercrombie's leaderless army floundered back through the forest to the landing-place, the French laboured with might and main to fortify their position. With coats off and axes in hand officers and men attacked the forest, clearing the ridge of trees as though a sudden hurricane had laid them low. Along the summit they made a zig-zag breastwork of logs, from which the whole plateau could be swept with cross-fires of musketry and grape; immediately in front of this they constructed a barrier of sharpened boughs; and beyond the barrier again for the space of a musket-shot they reduced the ground to a tangled mass of logs and boughs and stumps. Such a position was impregnable by a frontal attack, but it had weaknesses of which Montcalm was fully conscious, and which Howe would have at once detected; for the English could sweep it with gun-fire from rising ground near by, or, by marching across to Lake Champlain and severing the French lines of communication and supplies, they could compel Montcalm to surrender

1758. without firing a single shot. Abercrombie, however, was informed by his engineers that the position might be stormed, and believing that Montcalm was about to be joined by substantial reinforcements, he decided upon an immediate attack.

July 8. On the following morning the British left their camp with orders to carry the French lines at the point of the bayonet, and about midday Montcalm's sentinels could descry amid the trees beyond the clearing the long lines of scarlet which told of British regiments formed up in column for attack. The signal given, the columns of red advanced, knowing only that they outnumbered the enemy by at least four to one, and feeling assured of an easy triumph. Not a sign of the enemy could they detect as they plunged across the tangled heaps of stumps and fallen trees; but a murderous fire burst upon them as they reached the outer abattis of tree-tops and stakes. For an hour they struggled furiously to penetrate the abattis, hacking, tearing, and firing, but dropping ever faster under the storm of shot until at length they were driven back, convinced that the works could not be carried. Abercrombie, who had not yet come within a mile of the battle-field, sent up word that the assault was to be repeated; and again and again in obedience to his fatal orders the troops hurled themselves against the lines. "The scene was frightful: masses of infuriated men who could not go forward and would not go back; straining for an enemy they could not reach, and firing on an enemy they could not see; caught in the entanglement of fallen trees; tripped by briars, stumbling over logs, tearing through boughs; shouting, yelling, cursing, and pelted all the while with bullets that killed them by scores, stretched them on the ground, or hung them on jagged branches in strange attitudes of death."[1] When night at last put an end to the disastrous day, the British losses amounted to close

[1] Parkman, "Montcalm and Wolfe," vol. ii. p. 110.

upon 2,000 men; among them being Major Duncan Campbell of Inverawe, wounded unto death. 1758.

Montcalm's rejoicings over the victory were soon clouded by forebodings as to the issue of the next campaign. Canada, as he well knew, had been reduced to the brink of ruin by her incapable Governor, Vaudreuil, and by the gangs of his myrmidons who had battened on her life-blood; and France could not send help, even if she would, because the seas were swept from shore to shore by the unrelenting fleets of Britain. In addition to Louisburg the French had now lost Fort Frontenac, captured by Bradstreet, and Fort Duquésne, which had yielded to Forbes, so that Canada herself, as Pitt was quick to see, lay open to invasion. The campaign opened hopefully for the British, Niagara, Ticonderoga, and Crown Point falling in rapid succession, the former to Sir William Johnson, the two latter to Amherst, the captor of Louisburg, who had superseded Abercrombie on Lake George. After his initial successes, however, Amherst was checkmated by the retreat of the French to an island at the head of Lake Champlain, where, with four armed vessels to guard the approaches, they were secure, for the time being at least, against further attack; so that, if the fate of Canada was to be settled in that campaign, it was for the fleet and army which had gone to Quebec to settle it. That army consisted of about 8,000 men under the command of General Wolfe: even those who were growing accustomed to Pitt's audacity of choice were amazed to hear that a post of such difficulty and responsibility had been entrusted to a decrepit invalid of thirty-two. Aug. 27. Nov. 25. 1759.

The ships escorting Wolfe achieved the perilous navigation of the St. Lawrence without loss or accident, and on June 21 their sails could be descried from the walls of Quebec. To oppose them Montcalm had collected some 12,000 men, with whom he had encamped on the banks of the St. Lawrence, half mud-

1759. flat and half precipice, between the Montmorenci and the St. Charles; and that his position was virtually impregnable was shown by the heavy loss with which the first British assault was repulsed. After this failure Wolfe was entirely at a loss as to the measures which should be pursued, and, as the weeks slipped by, bringing no prospect of change unless it were the coming of the Canadian winter which would drive him away, his anxiety and despondency increased. In August he fell seriously ill, his illness seeming likely to give the death-blow to the last hope of effective operations; but when he rallied towards the end of the month, he found that his officers had hit upon a plan of attack, and he at once threw himself into it with all the energy he could muster. Opposite Quebec the St. Lawrence narrows down to a slender channel, commanded by the guns of the town, and the French thought it certain that nothing which floated could run the gauntlet of their batteries. Wolfe's naval colleagues had at first acquiesced in the enemy's view; but such acquiescence does not come easy to the British sailor, and, as wind and tide served, one vessel after another had attempted, and accomplished, the passage. The presence of these ships in the upper river had suggested to Wolfe's officers the possibility of effecting a landing above the town, and the General, searching the precipitous banks for mile upon mile, had at last found, about a mile and a half above Quebec, a narrow path which zig-zagged up the cliffs to the Plains of Abraham above. The French were evidently aware of the existence of this path, for Wolfe could see the tents of an outpost on the summit; but the guard was small, for Montcalm believed that the enemy could never get ashore there unless they had wings, and that a hundred men could stop them, should they try. To land a force at such a point in the centre of enemies who would outnumber it by more than two to one,—for Wolfe could spare no more than 5,000 men for his forlorn hope,—was indeed a desperate

project; but desperate projects are for desperate men, 1759.
and such had Wolfe now become.

On the night of September 3 the flat-boats crept up the river past Quebec, and on the following day some

SIEGE OF QUEBEC

A. French Camps.
B. British Camps.
C. Wolfe.
D. Montcalm.

5,000 British troops from the camp below the city marched up after them. Wolfe's first object was to mystify Bougainville, who commanded the French troops on the upper river, and who was now heavily reinforced by Montcalm and told to keep on the alert.

1759. With this object Wolfe sailed up to the French camp
Sept. 7. at Cap Rouge, and as soon as the enemy had turned out at sight of him, began to row vigorously up and down, as though in search of a place to land. Bougainville, who did not dare to lose sight of him, had to trudge up and down the bank in pursuit; and, as Wolfe repeated the manœuvre every day for the best part of a week, the French troops were almost marched off their legs. In the meantime Wolfe had learnt from a deserter that Montcalm was expecting a convoy of provision-boats to drop down the river under cover of darkness, and it was easy to see how the information could be made use of for his own purposes. As night fell on the 12th, the British ships in the lower river opened a furious cannonade on the beach before Montcalm's camp: whereupon Montcalm's men turned out in expectation of an attack, and Bougainville, delighted that some one else was to have a taste of the restless activity of the enemy, sent his weary men to bed. The night fell dark, and all was quiet and still in the British vessels in the upper river; but about
Sept. 13. two o'clock in the morning, as the tide turned, a signal lamp flickered at the mast-head of the flag-ship, and a large flotilla of flat-boats began to creep stealthily down the stream. They had already gone some distance when they were startled by the sudden cry of a French sentry: "*Qui vive?*" "*France*," replied a Highland officer, who spoke French well. "*A quel régiment?*" "*De la Reine*," replied the Highlander, and, that being the regiment expected to bring down the provision-boats, the sentry was satisfied and let them go on. Presently they were again challenged. "Provision-boats," answered the Highlander. "Don't make a noise, or the English will hear." Again they were allowed to pass, and were soon afterwards scrambling ashore at the foot of the little path which Wolfe had noticed a week before.

The post which Montcalm had stationed on the

cliff was supposed to consist of 100 men under Vergor, 1759.
the former defender of Beauséjour; but at the present moment most of the men were away on leave, and the rest were fast asleep. They were instantly overpowered by the twenty-four Light Infantrymen who had volunteered to follow Colonel Howe up the little path. Vergor's guard being disposed of, Wolfe's whole force scrambled up the cliff, and the dawn found it drawn up, some 4,500 strong, across the plateau outside Quebec. In this position it was in fact at the mercy of the French, for Montcalm might either pound it to atoms with gun-fire, or by waiting for Bougainville to join him from Cap Rouge, he might overwhelm it with vastly superior numbers. Either because he thought that the British would be reinforced, however, or because he lost his head in the growing confusion and anxiety around him, the French General decided to attack at once with the 5,000 men who had hastened up from his own camp, without waiting for Bougainville, and with nothing in the way of artillery but three field-guns. It was a few minutes before ten o'clock when the French line got into motion, and the British, springing to their feet, waited with arms reversed, silent and motionless. "Nearer and nearer drew the particoloured line, gayer and gayer as the blue and scarlet facings on the white coats came into view, brighter and brighter as the detail of metal buttons and accoutrements cleared themselves from the distance, till at length the time was come. Thirty-five yards only separated the opposing arrays when the word rang out, the still red line sprang into life, the recovered muskets leapt forward into a long bristling bar, and with one deafening crash, the most perfect volley ever fired on battle-field burst forth as if from a single monstrous weapon from end to end of the British line. A dense bank of smoke blotted the French from sight, and from behind it there rose a horrible din of clattering arms, and savage oaths, and agonised cries. The

1759. sharp clink of ramrods broke in upon the sound as the British reloaded; and when the smoke rolled away the gay line was seen to be shattered to fragments, while the bright coats strewed the ground like swathes of gaudy flowers. There was hardly a bullet of that volley that had not struck home."[1]

Whatever a brave general could do Montcalm did to rally his men, but his efforts were of no avail, and there was no further resistance except from the sharp-shooters in the bushes, who fired spasmodically as the British charged. In the course of the brief action Wolfe had been hit in the wrist and had bandaged the wound with his handkerchief. As he led his men forward, a second shot struck him; a moment later a third bullet pierced his lungs. He struggled on, lest his men should see him fall, but was soon borne unconscious to the rear. The officers who had carried him back watched the movements of the routed enemy: "How they run!" cried one of them. The cry roused Wolfe. "Who run?" he asked. "The enemy, sir; they give way everywhere." "Go, one of you, to Colonel Burton," the dying General commanded; "tell him to march Webb's regiment down to Charles River to cut off the retreat from the bridge." The bearer of the message hastened away, and Wolfe turned on his side. "Now, God be praised," he murmured, "I will die in peace;" and calm in the knowledge of duty done, his noble spirit passed away.

The fate of Canada was virtually decided on the Plains of Abraham, although a year was to pass before the end came. Montcalm, like Wolfe, had fallen in the battle, and the one anxiety of his successor, Vaudreuil, was to escape with all possible haste from the neighbourhood of the victorious enemy. As the British were also compelled to withdraw by the lateness of the season, active operations closed for the year with the British occupation of Quebec on September 18. Early

[1] Fortescue, "British Army," vol. ii. p. 381.

in the following spring, the French, inspired by one of Montcalm's lieutenants, made a vigorous attempt to regain their capital before help from Amherst could reach the garrison; but the attempt was foiled, and Amherst was already at hand. His coming destroyed the last hope of Canada, and on September 8, 1760, the possessions of France in North America passed for ever into the hands of her foes. Such was the outcome of Wolfe's victory, but the glory is not Wolfe's alone; the conquest of Canada was due, not only to Wolfe, but to Amherst, whose patient organisation had made the exploit possible, and to the officers and sailors of the British fleet. 1760.

In the meantime, while her fleets and armies had thus been wresting America from the grasp of France, England herself, always prone to such alarms, had gone crazy with the fear of invasion. In the year 1759, under the auspices of Choiseul, then recently called to power by the King of France, an unwonted stir succeeded to the habitual calm of the French naval ports—flat-boats building, troops mustering, and squadrons fitting out—and it became known that an army of 60,000 men was to be got together for a descent on the British coasts. Happily for England it was essential to this enterprise that the naval forces of France should be first concentrated at Brest; and these forces consisted of two squadrons, of which one was at Toulon, watched by Boscawen, whilst the other, although at Brest, was blockaded there by a British fleet under Sir Edward Hawke. The preliminary task of concentration was therefore likely to prove sufficiently arduous for the French commanders; but the commodore at Toulon, De la Clue, was told that he must make the attempt. Accordingly, on August 5, shortly after an action in Toulon roads in which Boscawen's ships had been so severely damaged that he had fallen back on Gibraltar to refit, De la Clue seized his opportunity, slipped out of harbour with 1759.

1759. twelve ships of the line, and made for the Atlantic. On the 17th he found himself running through the Straits with a brisk following breeze and a haze just thick enough to screen, without hampering, his movements. But Boscawen had not omitted the precaution of posting look-out vessels, and one of these, catching sight of the French fleet, at once headed for Gibraltar, firing signal-guns to give the alarm. With no hope now but in flight, De la Clue made for the open sea with lights extinguished, trusting to fog and darkness to baffle his pursuers. During the night five of his ships lost touch with him and took refuge in Cadiz. At eight o'clock in the morning sails appeared on the horizon astern, which the French commodore at first hoped might be his missing consorts, but which he soon recognised as Boscawen's scouts, the precursors of the British fleet. As must always happen in such a chase, whether in days of steam or of sails, the slowest of the ships which fled were no match for the fleetest of their pursuers, and soon after midday the rear French ship was overtaken and engaged. The captain of this vessel, whose duty it now became to sacrifice himself in order that the rest of the fleet might escape, understood what was required of him and determined to do it. Though surrounded by five English ships, he fought doggedly on for the space of as many hours, and only then consented to lower his flag because his top-masts were gone, his mizzen was going, his hull full of water, and himself wounded in eleven places. Of the six remaining French ships two escaped during the night; the rest had to be run ashore on the Portuguese coast, where Boscawen found them, capturing two, and burning the others.

Despite the disaster which had befallen De la Clue, Choiseul still cherished a hope that Marshal de Conflans, who commanded the Brest fleet, might contrive to throw a small force into Scotland, so as to rekindle the embers of rebellion which had smouldered for so

many years among the Highland clans. In the beginning of November a terrific westerly gale burst upon Hawke, driving him into Torbay for refuge, and on the 14th a sudden change in the wind enabled Conflans to get to sea before the return of the British fleet. On the evening of the 19th the wind backed round to the west again, freshening to a gale; and the next morning, just as Conflans was making ready to chase a small British squadron which had been blockading Quiberon, his look-out vessels reported sails to windward, which turned out to be Hawke's fleet. Finding himself on a lee shore with a rising gale, and with an enemy to windward of him whose ships were both bigger and more numerous than his own, Conflans determined to make for Quiberon Bay, "trusting and believing that Hawke would not dare to follow, under the conditions of the weather, into a bay which French authorities described as containing banks and shoals, and lined with reefs which the navigator rarely sees without fright and never passes without emotion. It was in the midst of these ghastly dangers that forty-four large ships were about to engage pell-mell; for the space was too contracted for fleet manœuvres." Hawke was not blind to the perils of pursuit, but he believed that wherever the French might go, they could be followed by his own crews, trained by long service in the open sea. His expectations were more than fulfilled. As the French Admiral, who was leading his fleet, approached the rocks at the entrance of the bay, his rear was brought to action by the leading English ships. One French vessel opened her port-holes; the sea swept in and carried her down with all hands: another was sunk by the fire of Hawke's flag-ship; two struck their colours; two more ran ashore and became total wrecks; the rest dispersed in different directions, closely followed by their implacable foes. That very day in England a frenzied mob had been burning Hawke in effigy for allowing the French fleet 1759.

to put to sea: had they kept their faggots a few days longer, they might have put them to a better use in celebrating a victory by which, for the rest of that war at any rate, France as a sea power had been crushed out of existence.

France had now lost America; her navy had been destroyed; her Indian Empire was tottering to its fall. It was an inauspicious moment for taking up the cudgels in the French interest; yet this was what
1761–1762. Spain now did, soon to find that she had entered the war too late to help her ally, but in time to share her misfortunes. By the end of the year 1762 England had swelled the list of her captures with the names of Goree in Africa, of Guadeloupe, Grenada, Sta. Lucia, and St. Vincent in the French West Indies, and of the great Spanish possessions of Havana and the Philippines, whilst a fleet of Spanish war-ships and many millions in merchandise and treasure had fallen into the hands of her ubiquitous fleets. It seemed that there were no limits save such as were self-imposed to the power or to the rapacity of Britain. "Our bells are worn threadbare with ringing for victories," Horace Walpole had written. "I don't know a word of news less than the conquest of America. . . . *P.S.*—You shall hear from me again if we take Mexico or China before Christmas." What a change from the gloom of the opening years of the war—the years of Braddock and Byng, of Hastenbeck and Minorca, of Oswego and the Black Hole! How great the services of that bold and gifted statesman who had aroused amongst the soldiers and sailors of Britain the spirit which had crowned her arms with victory in every quarter of the globe!

CHAPTER V

THE RISE OF THE EMPIRE IN INDIA

The East India Company—The *Compagnie des Indes*—Dupleix—He intervenes in the Deccan—Peril of the English Company—Robert Clive at Arcot—Activity of the French—Covrepauk—Effect of Clive's successes—Surajah Dowlah and the Black Hole of Calcutta—Clive starts for Calcutta—Budge-Budge—Surajah Dowlah marches on Calcutta—Clive attacks his camp—Surajah Dowlah makes peace—Conspiracy against him—Clive and the conspirators—Clive advances on Moorshedabad—Plassey—Results of the victory—French successes in the Carnatic—Clive plans a diversion in the Deccan—He despatches a force under Forde—Forde's victory at Condore—He advances on Masulipatam—Assault and capture of the city—Lally reaches India—His mistakes—He marches on Wandewash—His defeat: fall of the French Company—Clive's services.

It is a singular instance of retributive justice that the Dutch Governor who planned the Amboyna massacre should have thereby become entitled to a prominent place among the benefactors of the East India Company. Had the Company been suffered to drink its fill at the narcotic spring of the Spice Islands trade, it would never have realised the significance of a series of events, for the most part accidental, by which at the date of the Dutch outrage the great Indian continent was being thrown open as a field for its ambition and its enterprise. In 1607 an English vessel, which had been despatched to the Eastern Archipelago, was driven by stress of weather to Surat; and as the closing of the Eastern Archipelago led others to go by design where she had gone by accident, the East India Company began slowly but surely to establish a foothold in India. One hundred years after its incorporation the Company could lay claim to Bombay [1] with six factories depen-

[1] A map of India will be found at p. 296.

dent upon it in the North; to Fort St. George (Madras), three military stations, and six factories on the Coromandel coast; on the Malabar coast to three forts and one factory; and to Fort William (Calcutta) and seven factories in Bengal. At this period, however, its attention was called to the advent of a rival whose progress threatened to be no less astonishing than its own. This rival was the *Compagnie des Indes*, the East India Company of the French. Founded in 1609, a few years after the incorporation of its English competitor, then abolished, and finally re-established in 1664, the French Company, like ours, had passed from a sickly infancy to a sturdy youth. It had founded Pondicherry in 1674: a few years later it had acquired Chandernagore, which it speedily converted into a settlement of first-rate importance: whilst in the island of Mauritius, which it had garrisoned and fortified, it possessed a base of far greater value for military operations in India than the distant English island of St. Helena. Nor was it only from a material standpoint that the French Company was formidable. Organised by merchants, and governed by traders, the English Company had not yet awakened from the illusion that it existed for trade and for trade alone. It cared nothing for the chances of political ascendancy presented by the disruption of the Moghul empire, the revolts of local princes, the jealousies and quarrels of native states. The merchants who presided over its councils and directed its policy looked for profit and not for glory, loved the ledger better than the sword, cringed before the strong, and were arrogant to the weak. The French Company, on the other hand, was served by men who could be daring speculators, far-sighted statesmen, adroit diplomatists, brilliant soldiers, according as the needs of the moment required; dignified in their dealings with powerful chiefs; gracious in their demeanour towards their weaker neighbours; equally ready to resent an insult or to assist a friend; at all times

courteous, tactful, and firm. In one man, their Governor, Dupleix, all these qualities were embodied; and he combined with them a love of display well calculated to impress the Oriental mind, a power of quick sympathy not always very profound, a restless ambition, and consummate political genius. His keen eyes had descried a road through Indian anarchy to Indian empire, and along this road he proceeded with prudent audacity to advance. To Dupleix belongs the credit of the twofold discovery that there was an empire to be won in India, and that the weapon with which to win it was a native army drilled and led by men of European birth. That the profit of it went to England was due to three lucky facts,—the dwindling fortunes of an ancient house which placed Robert Clive upon an office-stool in Madras, the recall of Dupleix by his own Government, and the predominance of the British fleets upon the seas.

The signal for open hostilities between the Companies 1744.
was given by the outbreak of the European war over the Austrian Succession in 1744. Since the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle provided for mutual restitution of 1748.
conquests, neither side derived any material advantage from the war: but the British had learnt to dread the enterprise of their antagonists, and morally the French had scored immensely in the estimation of the people of India. The British had been defeated at sea, and a few shots from La Bourdonnais' guns had opened the gates of the stronghold of their power at Madras; but in Pondicherry the French Nabob had defied the combined assaults of the largest European force that had ever trod the soil of India and the largest fleet that had ever sailed the Indian seas. Moreover, in adding to the renown of Dupleix, the struggle had added also to his ambitions. He had marked the contests over disputed successions by which Indian states were periodically convulsed, and he determined thenceforth to appear in the new *rôle* of King-maker in Southern India.

1748. In the year of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle the Viceroy of the Deccan died, leaving two claimants to fight for his throne, a grandson, Murzapha Jung, and a son, Nasir Jung. Roving around in search of allies, Murzapha Jung fell in with an old friend of the French, Chunda Sahib, now the prisoner of the Mahrattas, who had long ago become famous as "the ablest soldier that had been seen for years in the Carnatic"; and the two, joining hands, appealed to Dupleix to espouse their cause. To such an appeal, backed as it was by a promise of important concessions, Dupleix responded with cordiality, and having advanced the ransom which would restore Chunda Sahib to liberty, placed him in command of a body of French troops. The united forces then advanced, defeated an army brought against
Aug. 3, them by the Nabob of the province, and occupied Arcot.
1749. They had thus obtained at a blow the mastery of the Carnatic, and had only to press their advantage home without delay to gain the Deccan as well: but the course of sustained activity which Dupleix exhorted them to pursue demanded a self-restraint of which the Oriental mind, at least in that age, was rarely capable. Instead of following up their advantage, they withdrew to Pondicherry to indulge in the ceremonious rejoicings which, in their opinion, were the true fruits of victory. Nasir Jung profited by the delay to enter the Carnatic
1750. at the head of his army; and seeing that Mohammed Ali, the son of the slain Nabob, had also taken the field, the East India Company bestirred themselves with somewhat tardy energy, and contributed a contingent with Lawrence in command. At this moment the French troops, who for some time past had been nursing grievances of their own, broke into open revolt, their mutiny dispersing Murzapha's forces, and throwing Murzapha himself into his rival's hands. But the indomitable Dupleix was never so dangerous as amid the ruins of his hopes. Quickly restoring discipline among the mutineers, he profited by a dark night and

a careless guard to hurl himself against Nasir Jung, who retired precipitately on Arcot: whereupon the British, finding themselves deserted, were compelled likewise to withdraw. This stroke he followed up with a second blow, equally prompt, against Mohammed Ali, who was sent scampering away, with Bussy at his heels; and when at last the fugitives rallied beneath the fort of Gingee, it was only to suffer a second defeat, the fortress itself, long deemed impregnable, being taken by storm. Finally, in December, the unhappy Nasir Jung perished by an assassin's hand, and with his fall Dupleix triumphed. Over the length and breadth of Southern India there was no one to challenge the supremacy of the French. 1750. Sept. 11.

Would the English Company never awake to a perception of their peril? At all events their awakening must be grievously belated, for Boscawen and the fleet had sailed homewards in 1749; in October of the following year Lawrence had followed them; and the engines, which had been sent away while the conflagration had been raging, could not now be recalled. At Trichinopoly, indeed, Mohammed Ali, the Company's ally, still struggled feebly to stem the tide of French dominion, but Chunda Sahib was taking the field with an army which made it improbable that he would struggle long. How to intercept the enemy and so save Mohammed Ali, whose fall would remove the last pretext for interference, was now the problem which faced the British, a problem well-nigh insoluble in the denuded condition into which they had allowed themselves to drift. However, by one means or another 2,000 men were collected, and placed upon the road from Arcot in the line of Chunda Sahib's advance. The next news the Company heard was that their last contingent in India had been driven back upon Trichinopoly, and was there straitly besieged.[1] July 28, 1751.

[1] An enlarged plan of the Coromandel Coast is given with the map of India at p. 296.

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1751. It was now apparent that the existence of the English Company depended upon the fate of the beleaguered city; but it was easier to perceive the evil than to devise a remedy. A few reinforcements had arrived from England, but so complete was the dearth of British officers that the task of introducing these troops into Trichinopoly had to be entrusted to civilian hands. The garrison was beginning to give way to despair, and the clutches of the enemy were fast tightening upon the town, when the elation of the besiegers was suddenly turned into dismay. The astounding news had reached them that the capital of the Carnatic had been snatched out of their hands. Incredible as it seemed, the news was true. Robert Clive, a young clerk who had just exchanged his office coat for an ensign's uniform, had gone to Mr. Saunders, the newly-appointed Governor, at Fort St. David, to propound a scheme for the relief of Trichinopoly; and Saunders had had the wit to rate at its true worth the magnificent audacity of his lieutenant. By dint of denuding the British settlements of the greater part of their garrisons Saunders and Clive had got together 500 men, mostly Sepoys, with eight officers to lead them, of whom two alone had ever seen service in the field. With this detachment Clive marched out of Madras on September 6; halted on the 9th at Conjeveram; and on the 11th advanced undaunted through the horrors of a tropical storm, to find that the garrison of Arcot had fled before him, and that the capital of the Carnatic was in his power.

By this stroke the situation was instantly transformed. Beside the capture of Arcot the fall of Trichinopoly would be an event of secondary importance, and Chunda Sahib could not maintain a firm grip upon the one without leaving Clive in possession of the other. So in spite of the inconvenience of weakening the besieging army he had to detach a force of 10,000 men to march on Arcot. There Clive was

busily preparing for their reception, mounting guns, collecting stores, building new fortifications, and repairing old ones: but no energy could quite overcome the radical faults of the fort. It stood in the heart of the town, surrounded by houses in which an enemy could take cover; two broad causeways approached the gates; the ditch was dry, the walls were low, the ramparts narrow, the towers ruined. Such was the place which, upon the arrival of the enemy on October 4, Clive with a garrison now barely 300 strong was called upon to defend. For close upon two months he did so, offering at every point a resistance cool, vigorous, and determined. So heroic was his conduct deemed that Morari Rao, the Mahratta chief, succumbed to the spell; and the news came that a relieving column was advancing from Madras, escorted by his wild and terrible horse. In view of this intelligence the enemy determined upon an immediate assault, the more readily that two breaches had now been made in the walls, and that the British could barely muster 200 fighting men. Moreover, a day was at hand well suited to their purpose, the great Mohammedan festival of the murdered sons of Ali, when a Moghul army could be relied on to reach the wildest pitch of religious and inebriate enthusiasm. The design became known to Clive, and all was ready in the fort when the hour came. At dawn on November 25 the fort was attacked on all sides simultaneously, in order to divert the attention of the little garrison from the really vulnerable points, the breaches and the gates. In the forefront of the advancing columns elephants, with heads encased in steel, were driven on as living battering-rams against the gates: but before their work could be done, the great brutes, turning from the British fire in a frenzy of fear and pain, beat a murderous retreat through the serried ranks which followed them. Meanwhile at one of the breaches there had been a moment of danger, as the yelling masses came swarming on- 1751.

1751. wards; and Clive himself had had to rush to a gun and drive them off with rapid shots. At the end of an hour no less than 12,000 cartridges had been discharged by Clive's 200 men, and the enemy, of whom the bravest had fallen, could not be induced to face the British fire
Nov. 26. again. The long siege was over, and Arcot, so bravely won, had been not less bravely held.

Towards the close of the year Clive retired to Fort St. David, to concert further measures for the relief of Trichinopoly. His attention was first claimed, how-
1752. ever, by matters nearer home. No sooner were they relieved from the terror of his actual presence than the French and their allies resumed the offensive, and after occupying Conjeveram on the Arcot road, began to ravage the country right up to the outskirts of the British settlements. To put a stop to these marauding incursions, equally destructive to the honour and to the revenues of the Company, Clive left Madras on February 13 at the head of 1,700 men. On learning that he had taken the field, the French retired upon their fortified camp at Vendalore, some twenty-five miles distant, their force at this time consisting of 400 Europeans and 2,000 Sepoys, supported by artillery, and by a body of 2,500 native horse, an arm in which the British were entirely deficient. Despite this dis-
Feb. 13. parity in numbers Clive marched direct on Vendalore, which he reached at three in the afternoon, to find that it had been evacuated by the enemy. At nine o'clock he discovered that they had marched on Conjeveram and were within striking distance of Arcot, whence half the garrison had been withdrawn to make up Clive's own column. So the tired troops were called out once again, to settle down to another forced march by the light of the rising moon. Early the next morning, after seven hours more upon the road, they reached Conjeveram, only to learn from the immediate surrender of the garrison that the enemy had again given them the slip, for, as Clive feared, they had pressed on to

Arcot, hoping to take it by surprise. In this they were disappointed, as the garrison had received warning of their approach; and the place enjoyed too ill a fame to be attempted by a *coup-de-main*. So they turned back along the line of their advance, surmising that Clive would continue the pursuit, and eager to find a spot where they might await his coming. At a place called Covrepauk they found a position which exactly answered their requirements. On the left of the road as they faced Conjeveram was a grove of mango trees: here they placed their guns, with infantry to cover them: the rest of the foot were placed in a sheltered position to the right of the road, and the cavalry so disposed that they could be employed to hamper the advance of the British column or to cut off its retreat. This done, they sat down and waited. 1752.

Meanwhile at Conjeveram even Clive's troops had well-nigh reached the limit of their endurance, and it was not till midday that they were able to resume their march, to strike a blow, if it were not already too late, in defence of Arcot. Nothing was further from their thoughts than that the enemy whom they had tried so hard to overtake might have turned back to meet them, when, after another six hours on the road, the advance guard was brought to a sudden halt by a burst of fire from the mango grove at Covrepauk. Clive, utterly surprised though he was, lost not a minute in making his dispositions for battle. Having got the baggage into safety to the rear, he brought forward three of the five guns he had with him to reply to the French battery in the grove, disposed two more guns and some of his troops so as to hold the enemy's cavalry in check, and ordered the rest of his force to seek shelter in a watercourse on his left. Then in the pale light of the rising moon the fight began. Clive's gunners worked their guns with grim determination, but they were outmatched and outnumbered by the battery in the grove, and kept dropping ever faster and faster

1752. beneath its incessant fire. Clive saw that, if he could not silence the battery, he must give up the day for lost. There could be no question of attacking the grove in front, but perhaps it might be open in rear: at all events the move was worth trying. Clive would have directed the operation in person, but the men in the watercourse could not be trusted to stand firm unless their leader's eye was on them, so the turning movement perforce proceeded without him. The detachment, picked men one and all, crept round to the rear of the mango grove and halted while Ensign Symmonds went ahead to reconnoitre. As Symmonds stole forward through the darkness, he stumbled upon a handful of Frenchmen lying hidden in a trench, waiting to take their turn to come into action: they saw him and challenged, but he answered them in their own language, and they let him go on. Seeing that the men in the grove were far too intent upon the fight in front to be ready for an attack in rear, he rejoined his detachment, and led them stealthily forward once more, taking good care to avoid the trench. At a distance of thirty yards from the enemy they halted and fired. There was no need to fire again, for by that one volley the battle was already won. Of the troops in the grove many had fallen, the rest surrendered: and as soon as the fate of the battery became known, the whole of the French forces immediately took to their heels.

Covrepauk was a brilliant victory. With troops exhausted by incessant marching Clive had been surprised amid the shadows of falling night by a force greatly superior to his own, skilfully posted in a position of its own choice: he had faced the peril undismayed, and by a masterly stroke had snatched victory out of imminent defeat. At Arcot he had stemmed the flowing tide of French dominion: at Covrepauk he turned the waters back so that they would flow again no more. For three years longer the struggle continued around Trichinopoly, but in a way which showed how

radically all was changed since the scapegrace had left his office-stool in Madras to wrest the East India Company from the jaws of death and to quicken it into new and lustier life. Then by the hands of their own rulers the French in India were dealt a blow every whit as deadly as the victories of Clive. In August, 1755, Dupleix was recalled. He had built an empire on the quicksands of Indian politics, and it was only by the genius of the builder that the foundation of the building could be maintained.

Twenty years before the recall of Dupleix the provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Behar had passed into the hands of a Moghul Viceroy, who after the fashion of the day had set himself up as an independent potentate, and who was now dead, having bequeathed his throne to his great-nephew, Surajah Dowlah. Young in years but old in vice, cowardly, vindictive, and cruel, Surajah Dowlah hated the English, whose growing prosperity he viewed with alarm; they had baulked him of his vengeance upon an unsuccessful rival for his throne by taking the fugitive under the protection of their flag at Madras; and he was still further infuriated by the defensive measures which they now thought fit to take in view 1756.
of the probability of another French war. So he determined to collect his forces and march upon the English capital. The garrison of Calcutta at the time consisted of a small body of troops, of whom the majority were native, whilst the Europeans had no experience of active service in the field; and the news of the Nabob's advance was received with consternation. When, on June 16, his army appeared before the city, panic succeeded to dismay, the Governor himself giving way to his terror and escaping in one of the boats which had been got ready to carry off the women and children to the vessels in the river. Knowing resistance to be hopeless, those whom he had deserted threw themselves

1756. upon the mercy of Surajah Dowlah, to become, before many hours were over, the victims of a tragedy as appalling as any of which history has to tell. Within the precincts of the fort there was a room, sometimes used as a military prison, which measured barely twenty feet square and was unventilated save by two grated windows opening on to a covered arcade. Into this cell, in which a single human being could scarcely have endured the heat of a June night in Calcutta, the European prisoners, to the number of one hundred and forty-six persons, were thrust by main force by the Nabob's guards: only thirty-three outlived the night.

In due time the news of this disaster became known in Madras, but it was received there with a feeling which fell far short of the storm of indignation and fury which a loss so great and an outrage so flagrant might have been expected to produce. It is not often that such charges can be brought against those who have held the King's commission; but on the present occasion the naval and military commanders appeared to regard the extremity of the Company as a suitable occasion for pressing their personal claims: both of them threw difficulties in the way of organising a relieving force; and even those whose motives were less selfish were loath to part with troops which might soon be required in the Carnatic for the purpose of fighting the French.

Oct. Two months were consumed in discussions before it was decided that Admiral Watson, who commanded the squadron then at Madras, should sail with 900 European and 1,500 Sepoy troops under Clive: and Christmas had come and gone when the ships entered the Hooghly. The fleet having dropped anchor at Mayapore on December 29, the Admiral insisted that Clive should go ashore with 2,000 men and march against a fort belonging to the enemy at a place called Budge-Budge, not very far away. Clive did not like the business, and perhaps for that reason it came near being disastrous.

The march, though short, proved to be peculiarly arduous, and the whole force was tired out when, at a late hour of the day, it reached the neighbourhood of the fort; by some extraordinary piece of negligence no sentinels were posted; and in a short time every eye in the British camp was closed in sleep. Now it happened, although Clive did not know it, that Monichund, the general whom Surajah Dowlah had left in charge of the district, had reached Budge-Budge with 3,500 men that very afternoon; and the slumbers of Clive's weary men were soon disturbed by the musketry of the Nabob's troops. The British stood firm, however; one of them, pulling his trigger at a venture, sent a bullet through Monichund's turban which reminded him of the unpleasant direction in which the paths of glory lead; and the next evening, when a blue-jacket stumbled into the fort in a moment of drunken indiscretion, he found that it had been abandoned by the enemy. By January 12 the British force had re-occupied Calcutta and taken the town of Hooghly by storm. 1756. 1757.

While these events were in progress, Clive received intelligence that England and France were once again at war. The news was far from taking him by surprise, for a renewal of hostilities had been more or less imminent ever since the half-hearted suspension of arms which had preceded the recall of Dupleix; but as it inspired him with grave fears lest the French should now make common cause with Surajah Dowlah, he approached the Nabob with proposals for a treaty. The Nabob, however, who was both exasperated and alarmed by the successes of the Company's troops, was already advancing upon Calcutta with an army of 40,000 men; and on February 3 he encamped before the city. Still apprehensive lest French reinforcements should arrive to put back-bone into the invertebrate mass of the Nabob's army, Clive determined to attack him without delay. Selecting about 2,000 men for the work, he disposed them in a long

1757. column three abreast, and in the dead of night advanced against the Nabob's camp. Just as the day
Feb. 4. broke, the British came into collision with the enemy's outposts, and driving these before it, the head of the column wheeled to the right along a causeway which led into the heart of Surajah Dowlah's encampment. But a dense mist, which up to the present had screened the advance, now hid the movements of the British sections from each other's sight, with the result that the head of the column, as it wheeled down the causeway, marched into the line of fire of its own guns in the rear. Those who were exposed to the fire broke in search of shelter, confusing those behind, who could not guess the purport of the movement; and just as the enemy's guns had opened upon them and brought the disorder to a height, the fog suddenly rose, revealing the British force in scattered and confused groups in the very centre of the Nabob's host. When at last the column got back to camp, the afternoon was far advanced, and there was many a gap in the ranks.

Clive's men complained, not unnaturally, that his rashness had come near to involving the entire force in disaster; but the pusillanimous Nabob took a very different view of the matter, and was so much impressed by the sheer audacity of the attempt that before the week was over he had agreed to raise the siege of Calcutta, to pay an indemnity for his misdeeds, and to bind himself to the Company in the bonds of an alliance for offence and defence. That this union would be short-lived must have been obvious to any one who was acquainted, however slightly, with the character and antecedents of Surajah Dowlah; and in fact it was scarcely a month old when the parties were again on the brink of hostilities because Clive had taken forcible possession of Chandernagore in defiance of the Nabob's emphatic declaration that he would neither make war on the French himself nor sanction such action on the part of his new allies. In this state of their relations

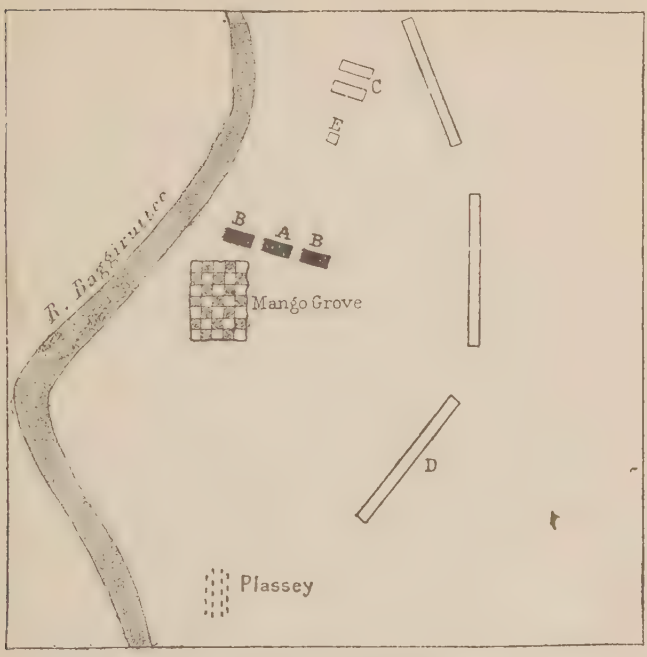
Clive was glad enough to avail himself of an offer of help which now reached him from an unexpected quarter. Weary of service under a prince at once insolent, fickle, and cruel, the most powerful of the Nabob's servants were plotting to remove their master from the throne, and to instal in his place a certain soldier of fortune, by name Meer Jaffier, who had married the sister of the last prince, and who, as commander-in-chief of the reigning Nabob's forces, was happily situated for playing a leading part in the conspiracy. Desiring to strengthen their position by enlisting the sympathies of the East India Company, the conspirators entered into negotiations with Calcutta, where their overtures were favourably received, and by none more favourably than by Clive. The question—supposing Clive to have troubled himself with a consideration of its ethical aspect—would have presented itself somewhat in this shape. It was futile to speak of peace with Surajah Dowlah when there could be no peace: either the Nabob must be covertly removed, or he must be openly defied; and the dangers of defiance, already considerable, might at any moment be aggravated by a coalition between Surajah Dowlah and the French. Moreover, Clive felt assured that a ruler who had repeatedly shown himself to be "a compound of everything that is bad" was certain ultimately to be deposed by some means, whether the Company interfered or not. In the long run, therefore, British co-operation would make little difference to him; but it would make all the difference to the Company, since the price at which it was to be bought was no less than virtual sovereignty in Bengal, Orissa, and Behar. 1757.

As the negotiations drew to a head, Meer Jaffier, actuated by fear or perhaps by some more honourable sentiment, began to show symptoms of vacillation: and a merchant, Omichund, who had been employed as a go-between by the conspirators, declared that he would reveal the whole scheme to the Nabob, unless his silence

1757. were purchased at an exorbitant price. To circumvent this difficulty, Clive foisted upon the avaricious messenger a spurious agreement in which it was made to appear that the Company acceded to all his demands, although the original to which the authorities had affixed their signatures contained no such provisions: but the episode was significant, and on June 13, determining to strike while there was yet time, Clive began to advance upon Moorshedabad. The Nabob's host had been assembled at Plassey, a village about twelve miles south of the capital, where Meer Jaffier was also come to assume the command; and no man could predict by which of the passions contending for the mastery of his spirit he would be ruled, whether by the ambition which prompted treason to his prince, or by the fear which suggested treachery to his friends. He wrote to Clive from Plassey protesting his fidelity to the cause, but he was fresh from an open reconciliation with the Nabob, supported by the most solemn vows of immutable devotion; and Clive's agents had begun to entertain suspicions of his sincerity when on June 16 his subordinate at Cutwa, for all that he himself also was in the plot, greeted the advance guard of the British army with defiance. Clive, whose hopes, not of success alone, but actually of avoiding annihilation for his little army, were built upon the shifting sands of Meer Jaffier's constancy, summoned a council of war to review the position. A great majority of the officers present gave it as their opinion that the force should encamp where it stood, and Clive himself voted with them; but his real sympathies were with the seven officers who cast their votes in favour of a bold advance. Breaking up the council, Clive retired to the solitude of a neighbouring grove to reconsider his verdict. An hour later he came back to the camp, his final decision made: at sunrise on the morrow the army was to resume its advance.

Near the village of Plassey was a mango grove about

half a mile long, surrounded by a trifling bank and a choked ditch. Here, on the night of June 22, the British force lay down to rest, warned by strains of fantastic music that the enemy were close at hand; 1757.



BATTLE OF PLASSEY

A. British.
B. British Sepoys.
C. Meer Murdeen.
D. Meer Jaffier.
E. French.

and hence on the morrow, as the first rays of the rising sun ushered in a day upon the issue of which the fate of India hung, the English leader drew out his 3,000 troops to face the Nabob's host of 50,000 men. The

1757. British line was formed up across the northern end of the grove, resting on the river on its left; immediately in front of it, in a couple of tanks about a mile off, was posted a detachment of French troops who had joined the Nabob, supported by Meer Murdeen, his only faithful general; whilst the rest of the hostile array stretched far away to the right in a huge half-circle behind the British line. The signal being given by the French gunners in the tanks, the action opened with a lively cannonade, which compelled Clive, who could ill afford the loss of a single soldier, to retire to the shelter of the grove, where the fire would do but little damage, and where he purposed to wait till night-fall, and then to sally forth and attack the enemy in the darkness. Believing that some hours must pass before there could be any change in the position, he presently withdrew to an empty hunting-lodge beyond the grove, to spend the interval of inaction in obtaining the rest and sleep of which he stood in sore need after the strain of the past twenty-four hours.

Scarcely was he gone when in a moment the whole position was transformed. Dark clouds obscured the sun, and a deluge of rain burst over the battle-field. It mattered little to the British gunners, since they were ready with tarpaulins to protect their ammunition; but the enemy had nothing wherewith to cover their powder, and most of it was spoiled. Meer Murdeen, who knew nothing of the tarpaulins, and supposed that the British guns, like his own, must have been practically put out of action by the storm, moved forward confidently against the grove; but he was met by a terrific fire which broke his battalions at the moment that he himself fell wounded to the death. The unhappy Nabob, deprived of his one faithful counsellor, had only the conspirators to turn to for advice, and in deference to their counsels he called up an escort of 2,000 horse and rode away to Moorshedabad. As soon as his back was turned, the whole native army faced

about and began to fall back upon their camp, while 1757.
the troops under Meer Jaffier's command detached themselves significantly from the rest of the host, and the French, being left unsupported, were compelled to retire from the tanks to a redoubt at the corner of the native camp. As they withdrew, the British advanced, led by Clive, who had been recalled in hot haste from the hunting-lodge by a message from his second in command, and who perceived quickly that the disordered masses of the enemy were in no condition to repel a vigorous attack. From the tanks, therefore, the British pressed on, under cover of their guns, in three divisions, of which one was directed against the redoubt occupied by the French and another against a hillock to eastward of it, whilst the third or main body advanced between them in support. But scarcely a shot was fired at them, as they hurried forwards, for the enemy's native troops had broken in all directions, involving the French also in their flight; and the battle of Plassey was fought and won.

Immediately after the battle the victors occupied Moorshedabad and hailed Meer Jaffier as ruler of the three provinces. That which alone was wanting to complete the triumph of the new Nabob, accident supplied. The unhappy Surajah Dowlah had escaped in disguise, in the company of his favourite wife and of one trusted servant, and he was within a few miles of a French force marching to his assistance when he was recognised by a former victim of his cruelty and handed over to his pursuers. A few days after the battle he was brought back to the capital, and there, unknown to Clive, was put to death. Such were the results of a battle in which the British had lost but seven Europeans killed and thirteen wounded. "Yet it is not by the mere tale of the slaughtered and the maimed that such successes must be judged. The victory may have been easily won when the moment came for the actual clash of arms; but the main point is that the British were

there to win it. The campaign of Plassey is less a study of military skill than of the iron will and unshaken nerve that could lead three thousand men against a host of unknown strength and hold them undaunted, a single slender line, within a ring of fifty thousand enemies."[1]

Clive was relieved from the pressure of the crisis in Bengal only to be confronted by another and scarcely less grave problem. For lack of men and supplies the French had hitherto remained inactive in the Carnatic, but their deficiencies were now made good, and the news from that quarter assumed an increasingly gloomy
1758. hue: the enemy had resumed the offensive; they had captured Fort St. David; they were besieging Madras. From the British authorities at the latter city came urgent appeals to Clive that every soldier who could be spared from Bengal should be thrown into the Carnatic, and to comply with their demands was probably the safest course for Clive to pursue. But to Clive the safety of a plan was never a true criterion of its excellence; he was the less eager to send reinforcements to the Carnatic since he knew that Madras could take care of itself; and he considered that a diversion in the Deccan would be equally sound from a military, and much sounder from a political, point of view. Seven years before, when predominant in Southern India, Dupleix had placed a puppet prince of the Meer Jaffier type upon the throne of that province, and had entrusted the strings to the Comte de Bussy, who alone amongst French officers in India reflected something of the skill, energy, and ambition of his chief. For some years Salabad Jung, the Viceroy, had submitted patiently to a yoke which he lacked the courage, if not the desire, to throw off; but as well within as without his dominions the French dictatorship was regarded with jealousy and suspicion, and in 1756, at the instigation of Bussy's native enemies, Salabad Jung had commanded the French to withdraw from his king-

[1] Fortescue, "British Army," vol. ii. p. 424.

dom. Bussy complied with the Viceroy's order so far as to retire from Aurungabad; but contriving with admirable daring and skill to seize Hyderabad and to join hands with a relieving force, he was soon able to dictate terms to the Viceroy, and to re-establish his control over the Deccan on a firmer basis than before. And so, as Bussy supposed, the domestic revolution at Aurungabad would prove to be rather a fortunate event for him than otherwise: little did he think that it had inspired Clive with the notion that it might be possible to supplant French with English influence at the Viceroy's Court.

For the moment Clive's attention was fully occupied 1758.
with the affairs of Bengal, which were then in their most critical condition, and even after Plassey he was compelled narrowly to observe Meer Jaffier, who began to show symptoms of impatience of the Company's control. In the autumn of 1758, however, Meer Jaffier was too much occupied with disaffection among his subjects and hostility among his neighbours to be a present cause of disquiet; and it happened at the moment that Bussy's position had again been undermined, a local potentate within the French sphere of influence at the same time throwing off his allegiance and seizing Vizagapatam. As became one who had incurred the hostility of the French, Anunderaj, the rebellious Rajah, applied to the English Company for the loan of troops, whose wages he offered to pay; and he was furnished by Clive with a force of 2,600 men, of whom 500 were Europeans, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Forde. Delayed, first by a stormy voyage, and then by prolonged haggling with the Rajah, who had already repented of his generosity, Forde was unable to advance from Vizagapatam until December 1, by which time Bussy had been recalled to the Carnatic; and the French were commanded by Bussy's successor, Conflans, when Forde came into contact with them at Condore. Neither commander had any great faith in

1758. his army, knowing that the native allies, of whom each was largely composed, were dangerous mainly to their friends; and Forde was specially disinclined to take the offensive, because Conflans, although equal in European troops, enjoyed a great superiority in Sepoys. For a week both the armies lay inert; then at the
Dec. 9. same moment each General decided to attack his opponent; and while Forde marched off to seize the high road in Conflans' rear, the French advanced against the British camp.

The care of Forde's camp had been entrusted to the Rajah's troops, who no sooner caught sight of the advancing enemy than they made off at their best speed to overtake Forde; whereupon Conflans, who supposed that the entire British force was in flight before him, pursued the fugitives with more speed than order. Meanwhile Forde had heard the cannonade in his rear, and turning back to support Anunderaj, concealed his Europeans behind a field of Indian corn, disposing his two divisions of Sepoys in the open in front: these Sepoys, who belonged to the Bengal army, wore the red uniform which had never yet appeared in Southern India, except upon British backs. Accordingly the French infantry, hurrying up far in advance of their guns, halted at a respectful distance when they caught sight of the line of scarlet coats, and opened a musketry fire. Almost immediately the scarlet line wavered and broke, and the French, assured of an easy victory, pressed forward headlong in pursuit. Then to their dismay another column of red-coats filed out from behind the corn and faced them with perfect coolness. Half Conflans' infantry fell at the first volley; whereupon the rest of his force incontinently fled, abandoning to the victors their camp, their guns, their baggage, and their stores. Conflans himself did not draw bridle till forty miles of road separated him from the scene of his disaster, his one desire being to put himself and his demoralised army under cover of the ramparts at Masulipatam.

Notwithstanding this victory Forde's position re- 1758.
mained one of difficulty and danger. The enemy, though weakened by their defeat, were still numerically superior to the British, and they showed signs of regaining their tone in the security of a position which nature and art had combined to make almost impregnable. Protected by an estuary on the side of the sea, Masulipatam was defended towards the land, not only by the usual apparatus of ditches, palisades, walls, and bastions, but also by a surrounding swamp, over which the road to the town was carried on a causeway swept by the guns of a projecting fort. Forde followed Conflans at his leisure, 1759.
and taking up his position on some sandhills, which furnished the only solid ground within reach, began to cannonade the town; but he lacked men and materials for an effective siege, and had progressed but little when he was disturbed by tidings of the gravest character. About the time of his arrival at Masulipatam a French army of observation under du Rocher had appeared towards the north, threatening the British communications; whereupon the chicken-hearted Anunderaj declined to carry out his bargain, and as the British treasure-chest, which had recently been replenished from Bengal, had been removed from harm's way on the appearance of du Rocher, a mutinous spirit manifested itself among the troops whom Forde could no longer pay. Such was the moment at which the General March 27.
learnt that the Viceroy of the Deccan was coming with an army of 40,000 men, vowing vengeance against the strangers who had presumed to levy war within his dominions; that he was already within forty miles of Masulipatam; that du Rocher was moving rapidly to join him; and that at an interval of a few days at the most the united forces of the enemy would be within striking distance. Simultaneously with the receipt of this intelligence the weather broke, the monsoon bringing storms of rain which soaked the swamps round the town; and the gunners reported that in another forty-

1759. eight hours they would have no ammunition left. Forde fell a prey to doubts such as those which had assailed Clive at the council of war before Plassey. Three courses lay open to him, but to choose between them was at best but a choice of evils. To retreat by land would involve inevitable disaster. To embark in the ships which had joined him at Masulipatam was possible indeed, but it would irretrievably ruin the prestige of the British, probably not in the Deccan alone. With that splendid audacity which was becoming the common prudence of the British officer in India, Forde resolved upon the third alternative, desperate though that was: he would attempt the storming of Masulipatam, putting triumph or destruction to the hazard of a single throw.

April 7. There were three points at which the town might be considered open to attack; at the main gate, which, as already mentioned, was approached by a causeway; at the north-eastern, or Chameleon, bastion, which had been damaged by the fire of the British guns; and at the south-western corner of the morass, which had there been found on experiment to be fordable without danger. At the first and last of these places alarms of assault were to be raised by some of the Sepoys under Captain Knox and by the Rajah's levies, the real attack being delivered against the Chameleon bastion by the 376 Europeans and a few more Sepoys under Captains Callendar, Yorke, and Macleane, whilst Forde himself was to hold in reserve the few remaining Sepoys. It was arranged that the assaults, real and feint, should be begun simultaneously at midnight; and as the hour approached, the men fell in, and the columns moved silently away—Captain Fischer at the head of one of them, because Captain Callendar was nowhere to be found. What had happened to Callendar no one will ever know, for he appeared on the ramparts at the crisis of the storm only to fall dead at the moment of his appearance, his secret perishing with him; but the vain

search for him upset all calculations, with the result that the hour struck and Knox attacked before the main divisions were ready. Up they came at last, however, conscious of lost time to make up for, plunging through the swamp and across the ditch, then, under a hot fire, through the palisade, up the breast, and over the ramparts, right into the north-eastern bastion. 1759. April 8.

The British officers had resolved to separate as soon as ever they got within the fort, Yorke going to the left and Fischer to the right, to clear the ramparts. Under these ramparts there ran a road between the city wall and the neighbouring houses, and Yorke, just as he was setting out, caught sight of a body of French Sepoys marching down this road towards the bastion. They had not the smallest idea that the bastion had been captured; and when Yorke rushed out of it, seized their commanding officer, and ordered them to lay down their arms, they were so much astonished that they immediately complied with the order: whereupon they were disarmed and marched into the bastion. They were soon to find that there was to be no lack of company in the Chameleon fort that night, for Yorke and Fischer were hard at work on the walls, capturing bastion after bastion as they went, and sending back one division of French troops after another to the already over-crowded prisoner-quarters in the Chameleon fort. When seven bastions had been carried, Conflans, bewildered and dismayed, sent word to Forde that he was prepared to surrender on honourable terms; to which the English commander, thinking to disguise his weakness, sent answer that he could consent to nothing but a surrender at discretion. The confident tone of the reply served, as it was intended, to deepen Conflans' despair; and he at once gave orders that the garrison of 2,500 men should lay down their arms and the town be surrendered into Forde's hands.

The capture of Masulipatam produced a sudden change of front on the part of Salabad Jung, who no

longer talked of punishing the British for levying war in his territories after such a taste of the way in which they did it, but on the contrary showered concessions upon them, and vowed that no French uniform should ever again be seen within his dominions. He might well be dazzled by the splendour of Forde's exploit, for, as a feat of arms, Masulipatam has rarely been surpassed, taking rank with Arcot and Plassey amongst the most heroic achievements of the British in India.

We must now follow Bussy to the Carnatic, and trace the course of the events which had resulted in his recall from Aurungabad. The truce which had been patched up after the recall of Dupleix prevailed for a time on the Coromandel coast, because neither of the rival Companies was prepared for an immediate resumption of hostilities on the outbreak of the Seven
1758. Years' War. In April, 1758, however, Admiral Pocock arrived at Madras with a British squadron, and at the same time Count Lally de Tollendal, the successor of Dupleix, landed with his troops at Pondicherry from the fleet under the Comte d'Aché which had brought him out from Europe. Lally had been sent to India with express instructions to effect the capture of Fort St. David; and whatever his faults—it will be seen that he fell short of perfection—deficiency in energy was not one of them. On April 29 the fleets met off Cuddalore, the British having somewhat the best of the encounter, but sustaining such damage to their rigging that Pocock felt constrained to withdraw, to undergo repairs. This was Lally's opportunity, and he seized it. On the
April 29. very day of the naval battle the advance guard of his army appeared before Fort St. David; two days later he himself attacked Cuddalore, which capitulated; and by the beginning of June he had obtained possession of both Devicotah and Fort St. David.

Fortunately for his enemies, Lally's energy outran his discretion, causing him to sow the seeds of disaster

with even greater vigour than he gathered the fruits of success. He had advanced impetuously against Fort St. David without either supplies or transport, and by way of remedying these defects he permitted his troops to get food by plundering and to coerce natives without distinction of rank into the degrading work of carriage. Nor was it the sympathies of natives only that he contrived to alienate. Bussy was soon to be infuriated by his recall from the Deccan, the scene of his military and diplomatic triumphs; d'Aché, the Admiral, was already sullen; and the civil authorities, whose disloyalty was chronic, either would not or could not supply funds for further military operations. In his eagerness to follow up his earlier successes with a decisive blow against the British capital in the Carnatic, Lally turned upon his neighbours to extort the money that he could not obtain from his friends, and marched into Tanjore. The march resolved itself into a marauding excursion in which Lally allowed the last vestige of discipline to disappear from his army, whilst he incurred the hatred of every native to whom his name was known by seizing their supplies, pillaging their cities, and profaning their sacred places. By the time that he was ready to advance against Madras, the French fleet had been driven off the Indian seas, and the entire military force of the English Company in the Carnatic had been concentrated in the southern capital. 1758.

Lally reached Madras on December 13, maintained an ineffective blockade for about two months, and on February 17, upon the arrival of a British squadron, withdrew precipitately, leaving guns and stores behind. The year which followed was singularly uneventful, being marked only by an unprofitable diversion on the part of Lally in the south and on the side of the British by the reduction of certain scattered French posts, of which the most important was known by the name of Wandewash. To the recapture of this place Lally then devoted himself, but it was not till the beginning 1759. April 15.

1760. of January, 1760, that he was ready to move. His preparations completed, he began with a demonstration against Conjeveram, thinking to distract the attention of the enemy from his real objective by a feint in another quarter; in which he was not disappointed, for the British Commander-in-Chief, Eyre Coote, heard of his movement on January 11, and started off post-haste to the relief of the threatened fortress. As soon as the faces of the Company's troops were turned towards Conjeveram, Lally and his army slipped away quietly to Wandewash, hoping to carry the place by a *coup-de-main*. In this they were disappointed, however, the garrison being ready to receive them; and their siege works progressed so slowly that their guns had only been in position for twenty-four hours when Coote, who had discovered the trick they had played him, arrived upon the scene.

Coote halted within seven miles of Wandewash on January 21, and early the next morning went forward with a body of cavalry to reconnoitre, leaving orders for the rest of his force to follow him with all speed. The enemy, as he could see, were strongly posted, covered by an entrenched tank mounted with guns; but finding that they paid no heed to his presence, he began to edge away to the right, with the twofold object of turning their position and getting into touch with his own beleaguered garrison. Grasping, after a while, the meaning of Coote's manœuvre, Lally presently brought his army forward, in time to check the British turning movement, but too late to avoid a sudden alteration of his own dispositions for battle. The action then opened with a furious charge of French cavalry, before which Coote's native horse broke into shreds and even his Sepoys wavered, but which was eventually repelled by the coolness of a small body of British cavalry and by the opportune arrival of a couple of guns. The cavalry charge having been repulsed, Lally detached the infantry regiment of Lorraine from

his right, and forming it in file of twelve abreast, hurled it against the British line: but it was greeted by a blasting volley at short range, and was soon scampering back to its camp, with the British regulars at its heels. 1760.

Then there happened an accident which determined the issue of the fray. A shot from a British gun fell into a powder-cart in Lally's fortified tank, producing a terrific explosion which emptied the entrenchment of every Frenchman within it. The importance of the deserted post was well understood on both sides, and in a moment Bussy from the French ranks, and Brereton from the English, were racing for possession of it. Bussy was the first to arrive, but he had only two platoons with him, and Brereton, sweeping down like an avalanche, for the second time cleared the trenches round the tank of every living French soldier. Bent on retrieving the position, Bussy turned to Lally's regiment, wheeled it round, and again advanced towards the tank; but the British had now got their guns into action, and Lally's regiment fled, like Lorraine earlier in the day, leaving Bussy a prisoner in the enemies' hands. The doom of Lally's army was now sealed. His Sepoys, who had not yet come into action, had no stomach for a battle which they knew to be already lost; the Mahratta horse, seeing how things were going, made off hastily; and the third and last regiment of French regulars, exposed on right and left by the destruction of the regiments of Lally and Lorraine, was compelled to retreat as best it could. The remnants of the French force were saved from annihilation by the weakness of the army which had beaten them; but enough had been done to dispose of French rivalry in Southern India. Pondicherry, invested after the battle, surrendered on January 15, 1761; and by April in the same year "the white flag of the Bourbons had ceased to fly in India."

Clive's hand is not visible in the final scene, but the

spirit at work had been his, and the outcome crowned his task. He had found the French triumphant in India; he left them with not a foot of Indian soil to call their own. He had found the East India Company a band of merchants existing on sufferance as the leaseholders of a few trading stations; after endowing it with a vast revenue, he left it a political power of the first rank, supreme in the Carnatic, the dictator of the Deccan, an acknowledged master in the provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Behar. "Great in council, great in war, great in his exploits, which were many, and great in his faults, which were few, Clive will ever be remembered as the man who laid deeply the foundations of our Indian Empire, and who in a time of national despondency restored the tarnished honour of the British arms."[1]

NOTE.—Under the terms of the Treaty of Paris (1763) England became entitled to Canada, Nova Scotia, the valley of the Ohio, Florida, and all French and Spanish territory to the east of the Mississippi except the city of New Orleans; to St. Vincent, Tobago, Dominica, and Grenada in the West Indies; and in the Mediterranean to Minorca. In India she retained all her conquests, only leaving the French Company a foothold on the continent in the character of a mere trading corporation.

[1] Sir Charles Wilson, "Lord Clive" (English Men of Action), p. 221.

CHAPTER VI

THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE: ENGLAND AND AMERICA

Criticisms of the Peace of Paris—England's Imperial responsibilities—Grenville proposes to tax America—Objections of the Americans—Strength of the American position—The Stamp Act—Riots in America—Rockingham attempts a compromise—Charles Townshend's tea tax—Further riots in America—The "Boston Massacre"—American discontent—Lexington—General Gage besieged in Boston—Bunker's Hill—England unprepared for war—The British evacuate Boston—British successes around New York—European hostility to England—Washington surprises Trenton—Howe advances on Philadelphia—Brandy-Wine Creek—Germaine's plans for an advance on New England—Burgoyne starts from Canada—His difficulties—Saratoga.

Like the Treaty of Utrecht, which put an end to the War of the Spanish Succession, the Treaty of Paris at the close of the Seven Years' War was negotiated on behalf of Great Britain, not by the party which had carried on the war, but by the party which had opposed it, and the terms to which they agreed have been subjected to much unfavourable comment. Critics of the Treaty have argued, with considerable force, that the gains of England, though undeniably great, were inadequate by comparison with the magnitude of her triumph; but its apologist may reply that in its very imperfections it reflected the spirit of Imperial pride which the career of Pitt had aroused among his countrymen; the gains which it did secure were Imperial, not insular; and its provisions showed that the mother-country had thought rather of her children than of herself. Had the policy of England been merely selfish,

she would have retained the valuable sugar-islands in the West Indies which she had captured from the French, and would have restored to its former owners the barren wilderness in North America which produced nothing and cost much to govern and defend. But in her desire to assist her Colonies she stood out for the expulsion of France and Spain from North America, believing that so she might free her children from the fear of foreign interference and remove the last obstacle to their development and expansion. The desire was noble; but was the policy wise? At least one acute observer was convinced of its imprudence. "England," said Vergennes to an English traveller, "will soon repent of having removed the only check that could keep her Colonies in awe. They stand no longer in need of her protection. She will call on them to contribute towards supporting the burdens which they have helped to bring on her, and they will answer by striking off all dependence."

The excitement of the war being over, England sat down to count the cost, which proved to be very heavy. In the first place, she found herself burdened with a national debt amounting to the then unprecedented total of 140 millions; and the great increase in taxation which this debt entailed was accompanied by a corresponding increase of poverty and distress. Further, in addition to the debt, the great Imperial war had bequeathed a legacy of costly Imperial responsibilities, but had produced no corresponding augmentation of the Imperial Revenue. In the opinion of Grenville, to whom the problem presented itself for solution, "it had become necessary . . . to foster every form of revenue, and, if possible, to diffuse over the gigantic Empire a military burden which was too great for one small island." It appeared to him that a permanent army of at least 10,000 men would thenceforth be required for the defence of America, and he considered that it would be but reasonable to throw a small part of the

expense upon the Americans themselves. He was alive to the fact that America was more than ever an object of desire to the enemies of England, now that she had passed into England's undisputed possession; he perceived how great her strategical importance would be in the event, by no means improbable, of renewed hostilities with France and Spain; and he was aware that it was to English troops that she was accustomed to look for protection against the horrors of Indian warfare. More than any other member of the Empire America had profited by the late war, which had made her safe, wealthy, and prosperous: why should America alone be suffered to ignore the claims of that Empire, to her connection with which she owed so much? England, which had poured out her blood and her money in the recent struggle, asked for no contribution to the cost of those great naval armaments which were maintained in the main for the benefit of her Colonies; in India the cost of the military establishment was borne by the Company; and even Ireland, though destitute of every blessing which America enjoyed, contrived to support an army of 12,000 men. Grenville, being charitably disposed towards America, attributed to the mutual jealousies of the thirteen Colonies, which rendered concerted action impossible, that singular incapacity for self-defence which the Americans had always displayed, and which admitted of less favourable explanations; and it followed from his opinion that the central authority ought to step in and supply the remedy. Parliament had always imposed indirect taxation upon the Colonies, and the Americans themselves had never questioned its constitutional right to do so: the legality of direct taxation also was supported by the almost unanimous opinion of the most eminent authorities. The twentieth-century observer may reflect that at all events in the matter of Imperial Defence the New World has been slow in taking into favour the old-fashioned theory that

it is more blessed to give than to receive; but he will not be surprised that the contemporaries of Pitt should have looked for generosity and patriotism in their countrymen beyond the sea.

The Americans declared that they were ready and willing to make a fair contribution to the Imperial Exchequer, but to the policy which Grenville proposed they brought forward two objections, which somewhat impaired the worth of their assurance. In the first place, they asserted that they objected to the imposition of taxes by Parliament simply on the constitutional ground that they were not represented in the body by which the taxes were imposed; but they did not really covet representation, and ridiculed the notion of sending delegates to Westminster. In the second place, they argued that, in effect, a sufficient contribution was exacted from them already under cover of the commercial system enforced upon them by the home authorities, under which their trade was fettered and their industries were stifled whenever they conflicted with the interests of English manufacturers or merchants. This argument left out of account the indisputable fact that the system did not enure to the benefit of the home-country alone. Many American articles had obtained a monopoly of the English markets by exemption from the import duties imposed on foreign goods; it was impossible, for instance, to buy tobacco in England which had not been grown in Virginia or Bermuda; if some Colonial industries had been strangled in infancy, others had been created and were fed by English subsidies; and the markets of foreign nations were open to the most profitable American products. Moreover, the system, whatever its theoretical shortcomings, was sanctioned by the universal practice of the day, whilst its application by England was so lenient that even the theoretical grievances of the Colonist had no existence in fact. The trade laws were systematically evaded with the connivv-

ance of the collectors of revenue; even in the height of the late war the pious Puritans of New England had managed to carry on an immensely lucrative business with those who were in arms against the Empire; and the enormous dimensions to which the normal smuggling trade of America had attained in peace may be gauged by Grenville's discovery that the takings of all the Custom-houses in America amounted to less than £2,000 a year. A judge whose impartiality cannot be impugned has given it as his considered verdict that "it is a gross and flagrant misrepresentation to describe the commercial policy of England as exceptionally tyrannical. . . . There were assuredly no other colonies in the world so favourably situated."[1]

In truth the most cogent argument of America lay, not in the strength of her moral or of her legal position, but in the advantages of her geographical situation. Should the Colonies desire to strike off their dependence, as Vergennes had predicted, England could scarcely hope to prevent them. A long and dangerous voyage separated them from the mother-country, and behind their gigantic sea-board lay a boundless continent, untraversed and unexplored. Their population was estimated at a million and a half freemen, and it was increasing with extraordinary rapidity. In the militia which had served in Canada they possessed the nucleus of an army; their farmers and frontiersmen led a life which was no bad training for a soldier; and they enjoyed a material prosperity amply sufficient to furnish them with the sinews of war. Nor, if it came to blows, would they be likely to lack allies, for the successes of England had aroused the hatred of all the Continental Powers, and France and Spain in particular thirsted for revenge.

Grenville's Stamp Act, now amongst the most notorious of legislative enactments, excited little or no attention when introduced in the House of Commons

[1] Lecky, "History of England," ch. xi.

in March, 1764. As its title implies, it imposed stamp duties on all legal documents executed, and newspapers printed, in America, the proceeds of the tax being devoted to the defence of the Colonies. It was accompanied by a measure which modified the trade restrictions in some directions, abolished them in others, and created a bounty on timber exported to England; and in addition to these concessions Grenville postponed the principal measure for a year in order that the whole question might be brought to an amicable settlement. Reminding the Colonists that every farthing raised in America was to be spent for the benefit of Americans, he assured them that he cared much more for his army estimates than for the constitutional authority of Parliament, invited them to raise the money themselves, suggested that they should send representatives to Westminster, and declared his willingness to adopt any course which might appear to them to be preferable to his own suggestion. To these advances the Americans made no response. If they really desired, as they said they did, to participate in the obligations as well as in the benefits of empire, they were capable of rare restraint.

The Stamp Act was to come into operation on the 1st of November, 1765. In the West India Islands, which had not generally been regarded as a nursery of moral and political virtues, the tax was paid without a murmur; but in America the agitators had been busy, and when the fatal day came, the bells were tolled, the flags flew half-mast high, the shutters of the shops were closed, as for a day of national mourning. The Assemblies, the merchants, and the mobs flung themselves into the movement and acted as their various natures suggested on such an occasion. The Assemblies emitted a flood of resolutions, memorials, and petitions. The merchants countermanded their orders for English goods, and threatened to repudiate their obligations to private firms in England, to whom they owed about

seven millions sterling, and who were no more responsible for Grenville's policy than were the Americans themselves. In almost every town throughout the Colonies the populace broke loose in a frenzy of lawless violence, burning the stamps, defacing or destroying the public buildings, and pillaging the houses of all whom they suspected of loyalty to the Empire. The Revenue officers, to whose lot it fell to distribute the stamps, were subjected to shameful indignities by mobs inflamed to madness by the rhetoric of leaders taken from the gutter and by liquor stolen from their victims. In New York the effigy of the Governor was publicly burnt, after being paraded round the town; and a figure symbolising the Devil shared with the representative of King George the place of honour at the head of the procession. But the town which signalised itself by the extremity of its violence was Boston. There was something peculiar in the ferocity with which the Boston rabble attacked the Revenue and Customs officers. It destroyed the Stamp Office, rifled the Customs House, and burnt the records of the Admiralty Court. Its appetite growing with what it fed on, it then turned its attention to Hutchinson, the Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Justice of Massachusetts, a high-minded and accomplished gentleman; and attacking his private house, it destroyed his pictures, furniture, and plate, and committed to the flames a magnificent library which it had been the work of a lifetime to collect.

Meanwhile, in July, 1765, Grenville and his colleagues had given way to a Ministry under Rockingham, in which opinion on the American question was divided, several of the new Ministers advocating a policy of coercion, whilst Conway, the Secretary for the Colonies, sided openly with the Americans. Rockingham, after considerable vacillation, resolved upon a compromise. The Stamp Act was repealed, and the restrictions on American trade were again modified, but at the same

time an Act was passed which asserted in emphatic language the supremacy of the British Parliament. Perceiving that the real question at issue was rather one of deeds than of words, the Americans hailed the arrangement with enthusiasm, enveloping in a cloud of loyal addresses the essential selfishness of their attitude. The British soldier in America, for aught that they cared, might still go unpaid and unfed; grudging hands doled out compensation to the victims of their recent violence; and the officers of the Crown were excluded from their Councils, their places being assigned to those who had lavished most abuse upon the King, the Parliament, and the Empire of England. The melancholy truth was that "many writers and speakers had arisen who had learnt the lesson that a defiance of English authority was one of the easiest and safest paths to popular favour. . . . There was no want of men who regretted that the agitation had ceased, who would gladly have pressed on the struggle to new issues, and who were ready to take advantage of the first occasion for quarrel. It was not easy for an ambitious man in these distant Colonies to make his name known to the world; but if events ever led to a collision, a great field of ambition would be suddenly opened. Besides this, principles of a far-reaching and revolutionary character had become familiar to the people. . . . Lawyers had assumed during the late troubles a great prominence in Colonial politics, and a litigious, captious, and defining spirit was abroad." [1]

Meanwhile the Rockingham Ministry had gone the way of British Cabinets, and in consequence of the illness of Pitt, the nominal head of the new Government, the real direction of affairs had passed into the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, a reckless and unscrupulous politician and the spoiled darling of the House of Commons. Indifferent to questions of constitutional authority and to

[1] Lecky, "History of England," ch. xi.

considerations of Imperial unity, Townshend's aim was to gratify the resentments of those by whom he was surrounded; and he knew with what sentiments America was regarded by the Court, whose officers she had insulted; by the Parliament, whose authority she had defied; by the country gentlemen, whose burden of taxation she had refused to share; and by the merchants, whose trade she had striven to destroy. In a moment of reckless folly, and without consulting his colleagues, he rose in his place in the House of Commons and pledged his word that America should be taxed. He proposed that the old Revenue duties should be more rigorously enforced, and that certain fresh duties should be imposed, including a tax of 3d. a lb. on tea—an adroit recognition of the distinction, upon which the Americans had insisted, between internal and external taxation; but it was provided with singular fatuity that the tea which was to pay 3d. in America should escape a 1s. tax in England, and that the salaries of Crown officials should be paid out of the proceeds. By this legislation Townshend abandoned the broad and just ground of Imperial obligation on which Grenville had taken his stand, to indulge in a fiscal frolic which was an injury to England and an insult to the Colonies. A few months later he died, having accomplished during his brief tenure of office an amount of mischief which gives him a claim to distinction, even among the politicians of his day.

May 13, 1767.

Sept. 1767.

The excesses which had marked the American opposition to the Stamp Act were repeated when Townshend's laws were promulgated in the Colonies. Whenever a Custom-house officer ventured to show himself, rough hands seized him and covered him with tar and feathers; Revenue cutters were attacked and burnt; cargoes of smuggled goods were escorted by armed mobs through the streets; treason was openly talked in the provincial assemblies; and the British Army was held up to the scorn and hatred of Colonial man-

kind. Two regiments had been sent to Boston to curb that unruly little city, and the treatment to which they were subjected is thus described by a writer whose eulogy of the Americans is rarely tempered even by a hint of disapproval: "None who are widely read in military memoirs,—and there is no nation more rich in the journals of privates and non-commissioned officers than our own,—can doubt that the men of Minden, like the men of Talavera and Salamanca, were as honest, humane, and (under the ordinary temptations and trials of military life) as well-conducted soldiers as ever carried a sick comrade's knapsack, or shared their rations with a starving peasant. But they knew very well that their presence in Boston was not meant as a delicate attention to the city, and that to make themselves disagreeable to its citizens was part of the unwritten order of the day. Any compunction that they might have harboured was soon extinguished by the inexorable hostility which met them at every step, and hemmed them in from every quarter. If they had been a legion of angels under Gabriel and Michael they would have been just as much, and as little, beloved in Fish Street, or Battery Marsh. Their good qualities were denied or travestied, their faults spied out and magnified. Men who during Pitt's war never tired of standing treat with soldiers now talked of them as idle drunkards. If they civilly passed the time of day to a woman she drew herself aside with a shudder. The very colour of the cloth in which, in order that America might be safe and great, Englishmen had struggled through the surf at Louisburg, and clambered up the heights of Abraham, was made for them a by-word and a reproach."[1]

But the day was soon to come when Boston was to learn that there were limits to the self-restraint of the British soldier. On the night of March 5, 1770, a crowd was called into the streets by an alarm of fire

[1] Sir George Trevelyan, "The American Revolution," ch. iii.

which turned out to be false, and being deprived of their amusement in that direction, betook themselves to the congenial occupation of insulting a solitary redcoat who was on sentinel duty before a public building in the town. Alarmed by their menacing attitude the soldier called for help, and was joined by a guard of a dozen men under a captain, named Preston. The mob, emboldened by a long career of insolence, greeted the new-comers with showers of snowballs and stones, interspersed with shouts of abuse and with derisive cries of "Fire, fire!" Misled by these cries, or impelled by the necessities of self-defence, seven of the soldiers raised their muskets and discharged them at the rabble, killing four men outright and wounding several others. The whole detachment was thereupon seized, and in due course brought to trial; but no jury could ignore the provocation under which they had acted, and they were acquitted. It was only to be expected that the "Boston Massacre" should furnish the mob leaders with a new theme for invectives against England.

Lord North, who was now at the head of the English administration, was anxious to make a last attempt at conciliation, and by his instrumentality most of the statutes which owed their origin to Townshend were repealed. The duty on tea, however, was maintained. As tea exported to America escaped taxation in England, and as the East India Company were permitted to ship their tea direct to the Colonies, tea which cost six shillings in England could now be bought for three shillings in America; neither did North forget that the Colonists had never questioned the justice of external taxation. But if he had any hopes of a peaceable settlement, they must have been dispelled by the reception of the tea tax. In December, 1773, three vessels laden with tea arrived at Boston; they were presently boarded by forty or fifty ruffians disguised as Indians, who dragged the cargoes from the holds and hurled them into the sea. At New York and at Philadelphia

the tea ships were refused admission to the port. At Charleston the tea was seized and stored in cellars, where it was left to perish. The news of these events was received with natural resentment in England, and Parliament determined to punish Massachusetts, which it regarded, with much reason, as the champion of disorder. By one Act the harbour of Boston was closed; by another the power of the Crown was increased; it was provided that any magistrate, Revenue officer, or soldier indicted on a capital charge might be brought home for trial; and General Gage, the new Governor of the province, was empowered to quarter troops on the inhabitants. Scarcely less distasteful than these coercive measures was the Quebec Act, passed in the same session, for the regulation of the affairs of Canada. This Act conferred no popular benefits; it expressly reserved the right of Parliament to impose taxes; and it maintained both the French Law (without trial by jury) under which the Canadians had always lived, and the Roman Catholic religion in which they intended to die. In every one of these provisions the Act offended against the most cherished prejudices of the popular party in America, whose denunciations were not the less vehement that the affairs of Canada in no way concerned them.

The fact was that the "patriots" meant to have independence, and meant, if necessary, to fight for it; already the Provisional Congress of Massachusetts, the self-constituted government of the Province, was calling upon the militia to see to their training and
1775. equipment. Towards the middle of April, 1775, General Gage learnt that the Congress had collected a large quantity of military stores at a town called Concord, distant about eighteen miles from Boston; and on the night of the 18th he sent out a small force to seize the magazine. At five o'clock on the following morning the British advance guard under Major Pitcairne reached the village of Lexington, where they

were confronted by a body of seventy Colonial militia- 1775.
men drawn up on the village green. Pitcairne ordered the militia to disperse, which they pretended to do, but as they retreated they fired several shots at the British, who replied with a volley which killed or wounded eighteen of the Americans and scattered the rest. Pitcairne was then joined by the main body under Colonel Smith, whereupon the British advanced to Concord and destroyed the contents of the magazine. His work being now accomplished, Smith prepared to return, but by this time the alarm had been given, the whole country-side had turned out, and the retreating British force was harried by an incessant fire from behind houses, walls, and trees. Even after Smith had been reinforced at Lexington by 1,400 men and two guns under Lord Percy, the progress of the column was slow, and its losses were extremely heavy ere it at last re-entered Boston.

Elated by this success, the American levies determined to besiege Gage in Boston, with which object some twenty thousand men assembled in the outskirts of the city, and encamped in a semi-circle around it. Gage observed, with some anxiety, that his position was commanded by two eminences, Bunker's Hill on the north, and Dorchester heights to the south; but with the meagre force at his disposal he could not venture to occupy either of them. Towards the end of May he was joined by three officers whose names were to be prominent in the coming contest, Generals Howe,[1] Clinton, and Burgoyne, with whom came reinforcements, not so many as Gage would have liked, but as many as he expected to get. At all events he was now in a position to occupy Bunker's Hill. In the meantime, however, the Americans had discovered the British General's plan, and slipping out on the night of June 16, they scaled Breed's Hill, which lay between

[1] Sir William Howe, brother of the Lord Howe who had fallen at Ticonderoga, and of Admiral Lord Howe.

1775. Bunker's Hill and the city, and set to work quickly and quietly with familiar tools. Not a sound reached the enemy, and when Gage looked out from his quarters in the early morning of the 17th, he beheld with astonishment a redoubt crowning the peak of Breed's Hill and a line of trenches running down the hillside to the water's edge.

The American project of forestalling Gage had been adroitly executed, but it was not in itself judicious, for Gage, whose ships commanded the harbour, could either land in rear of the American trenches or could occupy the neck of Charlestown peninsula and so cut off the party on Breed's Hill. Gage, however, seems to have been either flustered or over-confident, for with those alternatives before him he sent Generals Pigot and Howe ashore on the east side of the peninsula with orders to drive the Americans from their position by a frontal attack. The day was intensely hot; the men were encumbered with heavy packs; and when the columns began to advance, they found that the ground they had to traverse was broken with numerous fences and was overgrown with tall, rank grass. The British advanced under cover of a brisk cannonade, unsteadied by the obstacles in their path, and firing rather wildly as they went. Selecting their best marksmen to pick off the British officers, the Americans waited in silence until the enemy were close to the trenches, and then poured in a volley that broke them and hurled them back. Howe's guns were now out of action because the wrong kind of ammunition had been supplied to the gunners, and the smoke of Charlestown, which had taken fire, blew straight into the eyes of his men; but again he re-formed them for attack; again they struggled forwards; and again they were crushed by the deadly American fire. The British loss was now very severe, but Howe was not yet beaten, and with grim determination he ordered his men to throw away their packs, to fix bayonets, and to advance once more. As

in the preceding assaults, the Americans waited coolly till the British were close to their lines; but their supply of powder and shot was now exhausted, and unable to stand against the bayonets, they abandoned the position. They had fought with a cool courage remarkable in recruits; and splendidly as Gage's orders had been obeyed, the British owed their success in no small measure to the want of organisation, or of foresight, which had allowed the American detachment on Breed's Hill to run short of ammunition in the crisis of the battle. 1775.

With such affairs as Lexington and Bunker's Hill to quicken its perception, the British Government began slowly to awake to the fact that it was face to face with a serious war. As to the way in which this war should be waged there was a considerable difference of opinion. On the one hand it was urged that the notion that it was possible to land the British Army in America and subdue the Americans on their own soil was as wild an idea as ever controverted common sense; the only way to bring the Colonies to their senses was to blockade their ports and produce a paralysis of their commerce. The military men, on the other hand, argued loudly in favour of more heroic measures. They contended, not without reason, that the mass of the Americans were loyal or at the worst indifferent; that New England was the true champion of disorder; and that with 30,000 or 40,000 men it would be easy to advance upon New England from Canada, from Boston, and from New York, to isolate her, and to crush her into submission. For each of these schemes there was much to be said, but each of them left out of account the terrible weakness of the armed forces of England. The English Navy had been fast rotting away under the touch of the infamous jobber who disgraced the title of Lord Sandwich; the ships were few and bad; and a spirit of political faction was rife amongst the senior officers. Such was the weakness of the Army that it had been

1775. found necessary to entrust the defence of Gibraltar and Minorca to the Hanoverian subjects of King George and to mercenaries hired from German princelets; nor was the Army more fortunate than the Navy in its Parliamentary chief. Under the name of Lord George Germaine, the Lord George Sackville who had won undying infamy upon the field of Minden was now Secretary for War, enjoying supreme control over the service which he had done more than any man living to disgrace. In America, on the other hand, Congress, too often the inept master of its soldiers, had but just blundered upon an act of supreme wisdom which outweighed its many follies: it had appointed George Washington to the chief command, entrusting to the hands of the noblest of the world's great men the instrument which was to bring the American nation to the birth.

1776. After a gloomy winter in Boston, in the course of which his men suffered severely from scarcity of food, cold, and sickness, General Howe, the successor of Gage, evacuated the city on March 17, 1776. The movement was precipitated by the action of Washington, who some twelve days before had occupied Dorchester Heights, which commanded Boston on the south; and Howe, though he was able to carry away the loyalist inhabitants with him, was compelled to abandon a large quantity of guns and stores. From Boston he proceeded to Staten Island near New York, which he reached in June, and where, in the course of the next two months, he was joined by a fleet under his brother, Lord Howe, and by troops from Germany, Virginia, and the West Indies, which raised his fighting total to 25,000 men. Washington had likewise proceeded to New York upon the evacuation of the New England capital. Like the British General, the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army of America had been sorely tried by the long winter before Boston. Though his men could conduct themselves with gallantry when

in action, his army possessed none of the essential attri- 1776.
butes of a real fighting force: the soldiers lacked discipline; their equipment was meagre; their supplies and ammunition were hopelessly insufficient; they refused to sanction any extension of the short terms for which they were enlisted; and Congress, absurdly jealous of all military power, contemplated the trials of its General with equanimity, if not with positive satisfaction. But that indomitable leader had grappled with all these difficulties with the calm pertinacity which was one of his most marked characteristics, and after raising one army whilst he disbanded another, he was now at New York with a force which, although weakened by desertion and disease, did not fall far short of 20,000 men fit for active service. Washington divided this force between New York itself and some entrenched lines on and around Brooklyn Heights which had been constructed with great labour and which he manned with a detachment of 10,000 men. Seeing that these lines were the key to the American position Howe landed 15,000 troops on Long Island on August 22, attacked the Americans on the 27th, and drove them from their lines across the water to New York. He then crossed the water himself, and on September 15 inflicted a decisive defeat upon Washington's main army, which gave him the possession of New York. In November, Fort Washington, which the Americans had regarded as impregnable, was stormed by the British, who thus obtained possession of Fort Lee also; and in the meantime Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, who had made an abortive attempt upon Charleston in June, had met with better success in an expedition to Rhode Island, which they had occupied without opposition.

Twice in the course of this campaign, first on Long Island, and afterwards at New York, the American army had been allowed to escape from positions of acute danger in which a General of greater daring and of greater energy than Sir William Howe would in all

1776. probability have entirely annihilated it; and it is usually said that the American Revolution would have ended very differently if Howe had shown ordinary diligence in following up his successes during the autumn of 1776. Howe himself, who knew that the Americans were growing more demoralised at each reverse, and that desertions from their ranks were becoming increasingly frequent, expected that the Continental Army would break up of its own accord; and it is highly probable that the American Revolution would have collapsed despite the inactivity of the British Commander, had it not been for the active sympathy which about this time the insurgents began to receive from the enemies of England in Europe. Hitherto the Continental Powers had hesitated to go to war with England in the interests of her rebellious children, who might still resume their place in the Anglo-Saxon family circle, leaving the foreigner to extricate himself from his predicament as best he could. But all such apprehensions had been removed by the action of the revolted Colonies, which on July 4, 1776, had formally declared their independence. By this declaration the Americans enrolled themselves irrevocably in the ranks of England's enemies; and it soon became apparent that the significance of the event had not been overlooked in Europe, where Frederick of Prussia set himself to throw every possible obstacle in the path of the British recruiting officer, whilst France, Spain, and Holland despatched money, munitions, and guns in large quantities to America. The assistance was very welcome to Washington, who at the close of the year was able to take advantage of the negligence of his opponents to strike a blow which arrested the disaffection of an important district, and infused a new spirit into his despondent troops. General Howe had betaken himself to winter quarters behind an extended line of posts which terminated on the left in forts at Bordenton and Trenton, where he had stationed two detachments of Hessians under Colonels Rahl and Van

Donop. Rahl had received express instructions to put 1776.
Trenton in a state of defence, but Washington was aware that the order had been ignored, and that the Hessian troops had grown slothful, riotous, and indisciplined. Choosing his time cunningly, he marched rapidly upon Trenton on Christmas Day, 1776. The Hessians for the most part were absent upon plundering expeditions, and those remaining in the fort had reached an advanced stage of seasonable festivity; Rahl, the Colonel, fell early in the day; whereupon his men surrendered Trenton, compelling Van Donop to abandon Bordenton also.

This audacious stroke illustrates in a striking manner the skill and courage of Washington; but in truth it was only one of those rare gleams of sunshine that accentuate the prevailing gloom. For some months Washington and Howe waited anxiously for the reinforcements which Congress and the War Office were quick to promise, but very slow to send; but the period of inactivity was brought to a close in August by the 1777.
decision of Howe to advance by way of the Chesapeake upon Philadelphia. Washington, who anticipated a campaign in New England, was at first uncertain as to Howe's objective, but as soon as he discovered the true destination of the British, he took up a position behind Brandy-Wine Creek across the road to the Pennsylvanian capital. The position was well chosen, for the ford in front of him was commanded by guns and works, and below the ford the river became an impassable torrent rushing between steep cliffs. Howe, with an army equal, if not inferior, in numbers to the enemy, could scarcely venture upon a frontal attack; but his guns advanced and opened a lively cannonade Sept. 11.
as though in preparation for an assault. In fact he was gaining time until Cornwallis, who had moved off under a screen of light troops, should have crossed the river some miles farther up; and in due time Cornwallis appeared, taking the Americans in flank and rear, and

1777. compelling the whole force to fall back in confusion. Howe then advanced to Germantown, where Washington attempted to surprise him; but the Americans, confused by a dense fog, were beaten off with the loss of over 1,000 men. There was then no alternative for Washington but to leave Philadelphia to its fate, for his own position had grown more desperate, his army weaker and more destitute, than ever. "For some days past," he wrote from his winter quarters at Valley Forge, "there has been little less than famine in the camp; a part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days;" the men, he added, were naked as well as starving. Such was the plight in which the American commander and the few brave men who declined to desert his colours awaited the approach of winter, and it will scarcely be questioned that a single vigorous blow might now have crushed Washington, and with him the cause of the Revolution; but twenty miles distant from Valley Forge the troops of Howe had been lured into luxurious idleness in the Quaker capital, where the hospitality of a rich and loyal population had prepared a Capua for the British Army.

However unfortunate the consequences of General Howe's supineness, it was less disastrous than the activity of the Secretary for War. By the expulsion of the Americans from Canada, the capture of New York, and the occupation of Rhode Island, the way had now been prepared for Germaine's favourite project of a triple advance on New England from north, east, and south. In a different country, under different circumstances, and with adequate forces at the disposal of the Generals, such a scheme might have been undertaken with a good hope of success: but Burgoyne, who had gone home for the winter to place his vote at the service of the Government, and who had been called into consultation by Germaine, ought to have allowed for the insufficiency of troops, the inadequacy of all

transport arrangements in America, the difficulties of the route from Canada, and the skill which the New England levies had acquired during the French War in the irregular warfare of the woods. Germaine too had been a soldier, and even he might have been expected to comprehend that complete unity of action was vital to the success of the undertaking. Germaine, however, appeared to be as ignorant of the principles of strategy in the closet as of the code of honour on the field. It was with his approval that Howe had transferred his army from New York to Philadelphia, but at that very time he had been issuing instructions to the Generals in Canada to prepare for an advance on Albany, and a copy of these instructions he now sent to Howe without a syllable of suggestion as to how far, if at all, that Commander should modify his plans in consequence. 1777.

Burgoyne, with Germaine's orders in his pocket, reached Quebec in May, 1777. General Carleton, the Commander-in-Chief in Canada, had performed much excellent service with the somewhat meagre forces at his disposal; but he was obnoxious to the Secretary for War, and had been treated by him with studied insolence. Like the honourable officer that he was, however, he gave willing help to Burgoyne in pressing on the preparations. Only 7,000 regulars were to be employed on the service, but they were to be reinforced by Canadians and by Indian warriors; the British had been reluctant to employ Indians, but the Americans had removed their scruples by themselves employing them. As Burgoyne advanced, a force of 3,000 men, which had been placed at Ticonderoga during an American expedition against Canada in the winter of 1775, retreated before the British, but were pursued by General Fraser, who overtook and defeated them. With such comfort as he could extract from this success Burgoyne now set himself to grapple with the real difficulties of the campaign. He had come thus

1777. far by water, but henceforward his path lay through the forest, where the problem of transport threatened to become insoluble; yet it was essential to press on, and it was impossible to leave the artillery behind. Of the reinforcements which Germaine had promised in his airy fashion the Canadians had failed to join, and the Indians were growing sulky because they were not allowed to go marauding; whilst the retreating American army kept growing like a snowball as he rolled it back. Two detachments of his troops were surrounded and cut to pieces at Bennington, where the enemy had collected stores which he endeavoured to add to his own dwindling resources; and about the same time he heard from the officer in command that a diversion on the Mohawk, from which important results had been anticipated, had been wrecked by the indiscipline of the Indians. Had Burgoyne had a free hand, he would either have fallen back, or have remained in the town of Saratoga, which he had now reached; but Germaine's orders were precise and left no option to the General on the spot. With great reluctance, therefore, he continued his advance, and on September 19 he got into touch with the Americans, who, under Generals Gates and Arnold, had halted in the neighbourhood of Stillwater on the southern bank of the Hudson. The British ranks had been much thinned by sickness and desertion, and it may be questioned whether at this time they contained as many as 5,000 men. The army opposed to them numbered about 14,000, and it was now placed in a strong position on Bemis Heights, which had been turned to the greatest advantage by the skill of a Polish engineer bearing the now famous name of Kosciusko. Burgoyne noticed, however, that a hill which commanded the enemy's trenches had been left unoccupied, and notwithstanding the great disparity of numbers he decided to attack. The engagement which followed was long and furious: in attack after attack the whole of

Arnold's troops were hurled against the three regi- 1777.
ments which composed the British centre; for the space of four hours the slender line resisted every assault; and still, though with wofully diminished numbers, it held the enemy in check when night closed down upon the field. After the battle Burgoyne encamped on the ground which he had won, to wait for further news of Clinton, who had written to him from New York announcing a diversion in his favour. Clinton, indeed, would have moved before, but had been compelled to await the arrival of reinforcements which were required for the safety of New York; but at last he had been able to advance up the Hudson and had brought some brilliant little operations to a happy issue in the capture of two American posts on the river below Albany. Tidings of these successes were at once sent off to Burgoyne, to whom they were of supreme importance; but only one messenger was despatched, and he, by a cruel fortune, fell into the enemy's hands. On the very morrow of the British Oct. 7.
victory near by, Burgoyne, despairing alike of Clinton and of his own situation, determined to hurl himself against Gates in a forlorn attempt to turn the enemy's position. His men fought with the stubborn valour that had characterised them in every operation of the campaign; but they were outnumbered by four to one, and to such a combat there could be but one end. Behind them, however, all avenues of retreat had been carefully closed, and ten days after the battle the Oct. 17.
remnants of Burgoyne's army surrendered as prisoners of war at Saratoga. At the hands of Congress they were treated with a treachery which brought no blush to the cheeks of the politicians who had engineered the war; but like all true soldiers the American army could respect a brave though beaten enemy, and they knew that Burgoyne and his men had made as fine an attempt as was ever made by any troops under any leader to accomplish an impossible task.

CHAPTER VII

THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE: ENGLAND AND THE POWERS

Effects of Saratoga—Minor British successes—Germaine's plans for the conquest of the Southern Colonies—Clinton goes to Georgia—He captures Charleston—Advance of Cornwallis—Brilliant services of Tarleton—Treachery of Benedict Arnold—André goes to West Point—He is captured—Flight of Arnold—Rodney—The Armed Neutrality—Unsatisfactory position of Cornwallis—He continues his advance—Tarleton's force destroyed—Guildford Court-House—Retreat of Cornwallis—He enters Virginia and occupies Yorktown—His surrender—Responsibility for the disaster—Events in the West Indies—Rodney and De Grasse—Battle of the Saints—Siege of Gibraltar—Peace of Versailles—The American loyalists.

The disaster at Saratoga did more than any other single event to determine the issue of the struggle between England and her Colonies, although, judged on purely military grounds, it was far from being an irremediable disaster. Burgoyne, in the course of his advance, had destroyed more munitions of war belonging to the enemy than those which were captured with him; by the terms of his capitulation the 3,500 active men involved in his surrender were precluded from service in America alone; and in the wave of patriotism which swept over the country when the news was announced at home, they were replaced more than four times over by the enterprise of Municipal Councils and the generosity of private citizens. But the surrender of a British army was a blow to the prestige of England which could not fail to encourage her enemies and to dishearten her friends. Hitherto the French Govern-

ment had been restrained from war by considerations of danger and expense, and by fear lest the Americans should be induced or constrained to make peace with England; but all such prudential considerations were thrown to the winds in the first flush of delight produced by Saratoga, and an Alliance was formed between France and America which left England no alternative but war. The example of France was soon followed by Spain. The Government of that country had so far remained undecided, and but for the consequences of Saratoga it would probably have continued to hold aloof from the contest. As a great Colonial Power, Spain looked askance upon a Colonial revolt; as a monarchy she hated republicanism; her commercial system was based upon a monopoly of the strictest kind; and however much she might dislike the naval power of England, she had every reason to fear its hostile operation. So close, however, was the political sympathy between the two branches of the House of Bourbon that the policy of Spain might be said in a measure to be dictated from Versailles; and Saratoga, by directly influencing the conduct of the one Power, indirectly resulted in the intervention of the other. Before Burgoyne's surrender the enemies of England had not dared to show themselves in their true colours. After it her position became one of danger and even of humiliation. In addition to the revolt of her thirteen Colonies, she was confronted with the scarcely veiled disloyalty of Ireland and with the open hostility of those great naval rivals who had already striven, and who might yet contrive, to strangle her maritime growth: she was at war with France and Spain, and she was menaced with the enmity of Holland; a great foreign fleet patrolled the Channel; American corsairs descended unpunished upon her coasts; her African Colonies were taken from her; she was fast losing her West Indian possessions; and she had not an ally in any quarter of the globe.

February-March 1778.

1778. In considering the results of Saratoga we have been led to anticipate the course of events in America, where it seemed for a time that the British had been spurred to greater efforts by danger and misfortune. General Clinton, who had relieved General Howe at Philadelphia, abandoned that city in expectation of the coming of the French, and with Admiral Lord Howe and the June. British Squadron fell back on New York. A powerful French fleet under d'Estaing reached the coast in July, but although strengthened by the presence of 4,000 French regulars, it was foiled in its designs upon New York by Lord Howe's dispositions, and was soon after- Aug. wards repulsed in an attack made in conjunction with 10,000 men from Washington's army upon a weak English detachment in Rhode Island, which had seemed to be a tempting prey. The British, on the other hand, had never during the present war displayed greater vigour or enjoyed greater success. They destroyed two American detachments in New Jersey; they burned many of the little seaport towns which had shown a special activity in equipping or in sheltering privateers; and they captured or destroyed large quantities of ammunition and supplies. In Georgia, where the cause of the Revolution had made few converts, operations were undertaken on a more considerable scale, the British occupying Savannah, clearing the province, and re-establishing the authority of the King. These successes were carried still further in the 1779. spring of the following year, when the troops at Savannah again took the field, and after overrunning South Carolina and defeating the militia which attempted to check their progress, returned to Savannah in time to repulse an attack on that place by a formidable force of French and American troops, assisted by d'Estaing's fleet.

On the strength of these events Germaine began to propose to himself as a serious object the complete conquest of the Southern Colonies, especially the

Carolinas, where the population consisted of foreigners, 1779.
who were indifferent to the cause of the Revolution, of Quakers, who could be relied upon to remain passive, and of Scotch, who were sincerely attached to the British Crown. That such a scheme might succeed, if circumstances were propitious, had already been demonstrated by the success of the minor operations which had been undertaken in and around Georgia: but Germaine characteristically exaggerated the advantages likely to accrue from its accomplishment, whilst minimising the difficulties which it would involve. The loyalty or indifference of the Southern Colonists, on which the Secretary for War relied, although favourable to an occupation of the country, would rob it of importance: if the blow was to be vital, it must be aimed, not at loyal Georgia, but at the heart of the rebellion in New England and the North. Moreover, Germaine's scheme, even supposing it to be justified on political grounds, presented no inconsiderable military problem. If the Southern Colonies were to be occupied, Clinton would have to supply the men; but Clinton could not uncover New York without setting Washington's army free for an attempt on Canada, where it was probable that the sympathies of the people would now be enlisted on the side of France and her allies; and the effective occupation of New York would not leave an adequate force available for operations in the South. "The task set to Clinton was to make one army do the work of two, relying on the sea for communications between the different sections of the force. If the command of the sea were kept, the operations might be successful but could hardly be decisive; if the command of the sea were lost—and Clinton trembled night and day before the thought—they could hardly fail to be disastrous."[1]

However, the orders which Germaine had given were

[1] Fortescue, "British Army," vol. iii. p. 307.

precise, leaving Clinton no alternative but a vigorous campaign in the South; and on December 26, 1779, he left New York for Charleston. Severe storms assailed the fleet; several vessels, being separated from their consorts, fell into the hands of American privateers; the ship carrying the heavy guns sank; most of the horses perished; and it was not till the end of January,
1780. 1780, that Clinton's convoy began to arrive in small detachments on the Georgian coast. The delay had been turned to good account by Lincoln, the American General in command of Charleston, who had completed his defences and obtained substantial reinforcements from Washington by the time the British appeared before the city. Inferior in numbers to the force that he was to besiege, Clinton was compelled for a time to act with great caution; but in March he was joined by a British squadron, whose arrival cut off Charleston on the south, and in April an irregular corps under Colonel Tarleton, of whom we shall hear again during the coming operations in the South, surprised and dispersed the American cavalry upon which Charleston depended for its sole remaining communications with the outer world. On May 9, by which time the British had lost no more than 265 men killed and wounded during the siege, Charleston was compelled to capitulate, Lincoln's army of 6,600 men becoming prisoners of war, and his ships, guns, and stores passing into Clinton's hands. Clinton, feeling some anxiety lest the French should reappear before his headquarters during his absence, now decided to return to New York, leaving the Southern operations to the care of Cornwallis, whose columns were ordered to make a triple advance against Camden, Augusta, and Ninety-six. Cornwallis set out on May 18 at the head of 2,500 men, including Tarleton's Legion; and a week later, discovering the existence of a small body of American infantry under Colonel Burford, which had been marching towards Charleston, and which was now retreating with all speed before the advancing

British columns, he instructed Tarleton to press forward in pursuit. Tarleton set out on the 27th, accompanied by 270 mounted infantry and light dragoons with one light gun, reached Camden sixty miles away on the 28th, and, hearing there that Burford was then some fifteen miles ahead striving to join a force marching to his aid, pressed on after a brief halt and overtook Burford's rearguard about thirty-five miles beyond Camden at three o'clock in the afternoon of the 29th. Burford had sent forward his baggage and guns under convoy of a few mounted troops he had with him, and he now turned about to await the British attack. Tarleton's men had just completed a march of a hundred miles in less than three days; some of them had succumbed to the intense heat, many had dropped out, and the gun had long ago been left behind. Such was the fury of their advance, however, that in a single charge, in which only nineteen of them fell, they annihilated the American regiment. 1780. May 29.

This brilliant little victory was followed by two considerable successes which appeared for a while to have established the British upon a firm footing in the South. About the time of the fall of Charleston a body of 2,000 men from Washington's army had been marching through North Carolina; they had since entered the Southern province, where they had been joined by large bodies of militia; and they were now in the neighbourhood of Camden under the command of Gates. The British force at that place consisted only of 2,000 men, and was composed exclusively of provincial and irregular troops; but on August 16 it attacked and utterly defeated Gates's army, a thousand Americans falling on the field, and as many more being captured, together with the whole of Gates's guns, baggage, and stores. The victory was due in no small measure to the services of Tarleton's troops, who two days afterwards put the finishing touch to their work by surprising and destroying an irregular corps under Sumter which had been a Aug. 18.

1780. source of constant anxiety and annoyance to the British Generals.

Just as fortune seemed to be deserting the Americans in the South, their army in the North was shaken by the disclosure of the treachery of one of their ablest leaders. Benedict Arnold had repeatedly displayed his inborn genius for war: he had captured Ticonderoga and Crown Point; he had led the forlorn hope at Quebec; his defence of Lake Champlain, though unsuccessful, had been more remarkable than most victories; and it was his presence by the side of the incompetent Gates that had brought disaster to Burgoyne. Being incapacitated for further active service by a wound received at Saratoga, he had been placed by Washington, who entertained a warm regard for him, in command at Philadelphia. There he entered upon the leading part marked out for him by his abilities, fame, and position, throwing himself with all the energy of his nature into the rivalry of ostentatious expenditure which had become the fashion in the Quaker capital. The life was better suited to Arnold's tastes, which were extravagant, than to his purse, which was slender, or to his principles, which were not robust: to supply his requirements he began to speculate, and it is possible that he furthered his ventures by making an improper use of his official position. At all events he had not long been at Philadelphia when charges of dishonesty were brought against him by his enemies: such a man as Arnold was bound to have enemies, and they had not become fewer or less bitter since he had come to Philadelphia and won for his wife the loveliest girl in the town, the Tory beauty, Miss Shippen. After receiving an extensive circulation, the charges were examined by a committee, whose report exonerated Arnold from every imputation of fraud; but his enemies in Congress contrived to get the verdict ignored, and after a long delay he was re-tried by court martial. By this body he was also acquitted on every substantial

charge; but being found guilty on two trivial counts, 1780.
he was sentenced to the wholly disproportionate punishment of a public reprimand. The execution of the sentence was thrust upon Washington, who deeply resented its unfairness, and contrived to make "his reprimand the vehicle for a high eulogy on the character and services of Arnold." "Our profession," he said, "is the chastest of all. The shadow of a fault tarnishes our most brilliant actions. The least inadvertence may cause us to lose that public favour which is so hard to be gained. I reprimand you for having forgotten that, in proportion as you had rendered yourself formidable to our enemies, you should have shown moderation towards our citizens. Exhibit again those splendid qualities which have placed you in the rank of our most distinguished generals. As far as it shall be in my power I will myself furnish you with opportunities for regaining the esteem which you have formerly enjoyed." Thus did Washington mitigate the sentence of the court martial; but another and not less heavy blow was in store for Arnold. In the course of his public career he had handled large sums of money, and his accounts showed a substantial balance due to him from the American Treasury. These accounts had been brought before Congress, and had been found to be in a state of some confusion, as was not unnatural when records of multifarious transactions had been jotted down under the strain and stress of active service: no leniency was shown, however, and the accounts were disallowed.

Arnold's views had probably undergone some modification in the Tory atmosphere which he had breathed since his marriage; and before his troubles first came upon him, he had determined to leave the army, to enjoy a life of leisure in the country in the society of his beautiful wife. This course had been closed to him by the malignity of his detractors. Smarting under his wrongs, as good as ruined, and publicly disgraced,

1780. he had begun of late to look around him at once for a loophole of escape and an opportunity of revenge. He had not had far to seek, and he now set himself to attain his object with characteristic thoroughness and audacity. He had resolved to go over to the British, and to do so in such a manner as "to make himself the Monk of the American Revolution."

With this object in view he applied to Washington
Aug. to be given the command of West Point on the Hudson, and of certain neighbouring posts, which formed the key of the American position. Washington gladly acceded to his request, and Arnold, who had already opened an anonymous correspondence with Clinton through the intermediary of a talented young English officer called Major André, now began to throw aside all disguise both as to his identity and as to his intentions. On September 16 the plans of the conspirators were favoured by the arrival of a British squadron from the West Indies; whereupon Clinton hastily embarked troops upon pretext of operations near Philadelphia, and André sailed in a gun-boat to West Point, to arrange final details with Arnold. Being extremely anxious not to take any step which would bring him within the technical definition of a spy, André declined to enter the American lines, and arranged to meet Arnold by night in a deserted spot on the bank of the river. The interview was protracted, lasting till daylight on the following morning; and André, persuaded by Arnold that they could not then separate without risk of detection, reluctantly consented to return to Arnold's quarters and conceal himself till nightfall. While he lay hidden, his gun-boat was remarked by Arnold's soldiers, whose suspicions were so far aroused by her presence that she was compelled to drop down the river. From West Point to New York by road was a distance of about thirty miles, and this André had now to traverse on foot. Changing his uniform for civilian dress, and putting his papers in his boots

and a passport from Arnold in his pocket, he passed the 1780.
American lines after dark on the 22nd, spent the night Sept. 22.
in a house beyond them, and on the following morning resumed his journey. He was presently accosted by three men gambling by the roadside, who would almost certainly have allowed him to go by, if he had shown his pass; but taking them for his own people, he proclaimed himself a British officer. He was promptly seized and searched; his papers were discovered and taken to the nearest American outpost; and the officer in command there sent the papers to Washington, and reported the arrest to Arnold. The fatal message reached him when he was in the midst of a numerous company who had assembled to meet Washington. Arnold faced the crisis with the astonishing presence of mind that never forsook him in moments of danger. Announcing that he had an urgent call to one of the forts across the river, he called his wife from the room, and in a few hurried words imparted to her his terrible tidings. He then flung himself on a horse, and, galloping to the water's edge, jumped into a boat and made for the English vessel: he was visiting her under a flag of truce, he said, and had no time to lose if he was to be back to receive Washington. The Americans, therefore, discovered the plot only to find that the chief conspirator was beyond their reach. Not so, however, his less fortunate accomplice, who was brought before a board of fourteen American Generals, and was sentenced by them to be hanged as a spy. "André, therefore, having petitioned in vain to be shot, went to the gallows unflinching as became a British officer and a British gentleman. He had done his duty with full knowledge of the risk, so could not be dishonoured in his death."

The improvement of the navy had now become one of the chief objects of the English Government. Their efforts had been partially counteracted by an unfortu-

1780 nate spirit of faction among officers of high rank which had produced a violent quarrel between Admirals Keppel and Palliser after an unsuccessful encounter with the French earlier in the war, and which had since deterred several of the ablest officers from taking service under their political opponents. In December, 1779, however, high command had been offered to Rodney, and had been accepted by him. Since the Seven Years' War, in which he had served with distinction, Rodney had ruined himself by gambling, and to elude his creditors he had since been residing in France. There he had boasted that he could defeat the French fleets, if only he could get at them; and a chivalrous French nobleman, in whose presence the boast was made, had immediately volunteered to advance whatever sum might be required to free him from financial embarrassment. In the prevailing dearth of able flag-officers an Admiral of the known audacity, calmness, and tactical skill of Rodney was sure of employment; and in January, 1780, he was given the command of a fleet of twenty ships. His ultimate destination was the West Indies, but he was directed first to relieve Gibraltar, which had been under siege by the Spaniards since the summer of 1779. After taking several prizes as he sailed southwards, he encountered a fleet of eleven Spanish warships, and pursuing them throughout a stormy night along the dangerous coast of Cape St. Vincent, he captured six of them and destroyed a seventh. This done, he threw supplies into Gibraltar, sent home his prizes and some of his own ships, and proceeded with the rest of his fleet to the West Indies, where we shall hear of him again.

It was about this time that a serious question for England cropped up in connection with the sea-borne trade of the Powers. The non-combatant maritime nations, and especially the Russians and Dutch, had benefited largely by the war, and bitterly resented the claims of the British to search all neutral ships. In

March, 1780, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark issued declarations which widely extended the rights of neutrals, and under the name of the Armed Neutrality prepared to uphold their views by force. England could not afford to swell the ranks of her enemies by an open defiance of all these contracting parties, more especially since she was now on the brink of war with Holland. Although bound to her by no less than three existing treaties, the Dutch had refused aid to England in her hour of danger; it was known that they secretly supported the Armed Neutrality; they had supplied France with naval stores; they had extended the hospitality of their ports to American privateers; they had converted their island of St. Eustatius into an emporium for a gigantic trade in contraband of war with the revolted Colonies; and they had resisted the claims of British war-ships to exercise their right of search. In September, 1780, when the patience of the British people was on the verge of exhaustion, an American vessel was captured in which the President of Congress was sailing to Holland, to negotiate a treaty on behalf of the United States upon the basis of a draft which had been submitted by the Magistrates of Amsterdam. Failing to obtain satisfaction by diplomatic representations, the English Government on December 20 declared war. Notwithstanding the multitude of operations in which she was already engaged, England was equal to the task of chastising her new foes. In an indecisive fleet action off the Dogger Bank, it is true, the Dutch sailors revived the memory of their former prowess, and an intended attack on Cape Colony was frustrated by the French; but in every other quarter of the globe the ships and Colonies of Holland fell an easy prey. In South America, Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice were captured by English privateers; Sumatra was occupied, and Trincomalee and Ceylon were taken; and the Dutch were expelled from all their possessions

1780.

...on the Coromandel coast with the loss of 7,000 troops. A blow which befell them in the West Indies was in many respects even more serious. Before the Governor of St. Eustatius was aware that his country had gone to war, Rodney appeared before the island and took possession of it, together with close upon 200 Dutch vessels, and merchandise valued at four millions sterling.

We must now return to America, where the war was entering its final stage. We left Cornwallis in South Carolina, with his position apparently assured by Tarleton's successes and by his own victory at Camden. After Camden, however, things had begun to go wrong, and they had gone from bad to worse during the remainder of the year. Cornwallis himself had fallen ill, his army had suffered much from the unhealthy climate and from scarcity of supplies, the loyalists, who had flocked to the Royal Standard in the vivid imagination of the Secretary for War, had in fact furnished only a few contingents, more than one of which had gone over to the enemy. Tarleton, moreover, again meeting Sumter, had come perilously near disaster, and Major Ferguson, an officer of great ability, had been cut off by a body of marauding frontiersmen with the loss of 1,100 men. Still more serious was the fact that Germaine, unduly elated by the successful nature of Cornwallis's operations, had been encouraging that commander to ignore or defy his superior officer, Clinton, thereby substituting distrust and dislike for the cordiality and mutual confidence which had hitherto marked the relations of the British Generals. The Americans, on the other hand, had placed the control of operations in the South in the hands of General Nathanael Greene, an officer inferior perhaps to Arnold in audacity and in the faculty of leadership, but immensely his superior in the all-important qualities of patience and perseverance, in which he came near being the equal of Washington himself.

The final reduction of the South was the project of 1781.
the British for the year 1781. They hoped to accomplish it by a simultaneous invasion of North Carolina and Virginia, in which a detachment from Clinton's army in the North was to co-operate with Cornwallis advancing from the South. Reinforcements for Cornwallis to the number of about 2,000 men reached Charleston in December, 1780; and on January 7, 1781, without waiting for them, the General began his advance. As the British force, when joined by these reinforcements, amounted to slightly upwards of 4,000 men, the Americans, who numbered no more than 2,000, could not venture to meet it in battle. Greene, however, was fully equal to the situation. Dividing his men into two small bodies of 1,100 and 900 respectively, he himself moved off at the head of the larger detachment to threaten the right flank of the British, and sent the smaller under Colonel Morgan to join hands with Sumter on the British left. These tactics were extremely perplexing to Cornwallis; he would expose his inland posts to capture by Morgan, should he advance against Greene, and he could not follow Morgan without leaving the road to Charleston open before Greene. Eventually, though with some reluctance, he determined to follow Greene's example, and detaching 1,100 men from his main force, sent them off under Tarleton to destroy or expel Morgan. That officer, finding himself an object of attention, retreated as quickly as he could; but he could not emulate Tarleton's celerity of movement, and was overtaken on January 17 at a place called Cowpens on the frontier of the province. The ground on which he turned at bay was an imperfect clearing, skirted in rear by an impassable river—a position such as few commanders would have ventured to select: but Morgan knew that his militia would fight well enough provided they did not run away, and that they had only to glance at the river to satisfy them-

1781. selves that it would be safer to fight than to run away at Cowpens. His decision was amply justified by the result, which was due very largely to the admirable steadiness of his troops, regulars and recruits alike. Tempted, no doubt, by the apparent defects of the American position, Tarleton attacked with his usual impetuosity; but his men were weary after a long and arduous march; they lost most of their officers in their first tussle with the American militia; and they then broke in panic before the deadly precision of fire of Morgan's regular troops. Tarleton, having gone into action at the head of 1,100 men, came out of it with a tiny squadron of 12 officers and 40 troopers alone preserving some semblance of cohesion and order.

The importance of this success lay in the fact that, in conjunction with the destruction of Ferguson's (Oct. 7, 1780.) column three months before, it deprived Cornwallis of the light troops which were essential to his operations in their present stage; and Greene, appreciating this, fell slowly back before the British, dangling his rearguard before their eyes, and luring them on and on into the heart of a difficult and a hostile country. It is probable that after Cowpens Cornwallis himself would have preferred to retreat: but he was under the evil spell of Germaine's influence, he had committed himself by commanding the demolition of the defences at Charleston, he expected a diversion by Clinton on the Chesapeake, and he persuaded himself that in a vigorous pursuit of Greene lay his best chance of safety. Greene's numbers swelled rapidly as he marched through North Carolina, whilst the British ranks were sadly thinned by the inevitable incidents and accidents of a campaign in an enemy's country; and Cornwallis was outnumbered by more than two to one when Greene at length halted to offer battle at Guildford Court-house. In addition to their numerical superiority the Americans enjoyed

the advantage of a position of great natural strength, 1781.
approached by narrow defiles and covered by dense woods: but with nothing to hope for from delay Cornwallis could let slip no opportunity, however unfavourable, of compelling an engagement. Accordingly at dawn on March 15 he advanced to attack. Provisions had run out, and his 1,500 men started fasting upon the twelve-mile march which separated them from the enemy; but they were seasoned soldiers, and their hearts were as light as their stomachs. Getting into action about half-past one, they charged the North Carolina militia in Greene's first line, who fled precipitately; then pressing on through a hot fire from the sharp-shooters hidden in the woods, they came up with the Virginian militia in the second line of the Americans, and forcing these back after a severe struggle, reached the centre of Greene's position. Here a battalion of Guards was crushed between the American cavalry and the Maryland Infantry regiments, which were esteemed the flower of the American army; but it was only for a moment that the line of red-coats wavered, and as it again advanced, Tarleton, who had been fighting his way furiously through the woods, appeared on the American flank, compelling Greene to withdraw, with the loss of his artillery and ammunition.

Unhappily Cornwallis's position was not one whit improved by this brilliant but barren victory. Of the 1,500 men who had gone into action, over one-third had fallen, and the survivors, so far from profiting by their heroism, found themselves in a forlorn and destitute condition, without provisions, without adequate support from the loyalists, and without boats in which to cross the innumerable rivers and creeks that intersected the country. Rightly or wrongly the General determined to abandon South Carolina, and sending a messenger to Lord Rawdon at Camden to acquaint him with the decision, he fell back towards the coast at Wilmington. As might have been

1781. expected, Greene, as soon as Cornwallis was safely out of the way, set out for Camden on the heels of the
April 7. British messenger; and Lord Rawdon, who was twenty-six years of age and had less than 1,000 men at his disposal, suddenly found himself responsible for the safety of numerous garrisons scattered over the province—a responsibility which might well have tried the nerve of a commander of much greater age and experience. Nearly all the British posts were rapidly invested by American bands, and most of them were too weak to offer much resistance; but Rawdon, acting
April 25. with admirable daring and quickness, attacked and defeated Greene during the absence of his light troops, escaped from Camden during the respite thus obtained, and then, picking up three regiments which had accidentally landed at Charleston instead of proceeding
June 29. straight to New York, advanced upon Ninety-Six, compelled the enemy to raise the siege, and withdrew the bulk of his forces in safety to Charleston. With a bloody but indecisive action between Greene and a British force at Eutaw Springs on September 8, operations in the South came to an end.

We must now follow the fortunes of Cornwallis, who
April 25. had left Wilmington on the day of Rawdon's battle with Greene, and who on May 20 had joined hands at Petersburg in Virginia with a British force which had taken the field in that province under the command of Benedict Arnold. This force had been carrying on desultory operations for some time past, and the Americans, who would have prized the capture of its commander above many victories, had made a vigorous and all but successful attempt to compass its destruction. The arrival of Cornwallis's army and of other troops gave the British a decided superiority over the American division under Lafayette, but Clinton soon afterwards intercepted a letter from Washington foreshadowing a formidable plan for attacking New York
June 26. when the French fleet under de Grasse should arrive;

and this letter he sent to Cornwallis with orders to concentrate at some place on the coast, whence he could either send aid to New York or retire to South Carolina, according as circumstances should suggest. In compliance with these instructions Cornwallis, retiring upon York River, seized Yorktown and Gloucester, which commanded the peninsulas at the outlet of the York and James Rivers into Chesapeake Bay. Both places were hurriedly fortified, and by August 22 the whole British force in Virginia was concentrated within their walls. 1781.

Occupied by an army which was amply sufficient to repel the assaults of any force likely to be brought against them by land, and easily accessible to British ships, these two posts were well enough suited to their purpose, provided that command of the sea were kept. There was of course a danger that that command might be lost, and the British commanders knew well how disastrous the consequences would be: but they were assured that any French fleet visiting American waters would be shadowed by a superior British force. Unfortunately this calculation left out of account the foresight of Washington and Rochambeau and the energy of de Grasse, all three of whom had been briskly preparing for an extensive military combination on the Chesapeake, with Cornwallis's army for an objective. On August 24 Washington and Rochambeau crossed the Hudson, moving southwards on Virginia; three days later a French squadron of eight ships-of-the-line and four frigates, stationed at Rhode Island under de Barras, sailed for the Chesapeake; and on August 20 de Grasse, having collected every available ship in the West Indies, appeared off Yorktown with an overwhelming fleet of twenty-eight battleships. On September 5 Admiral Graves with nineteen ships made a gallant but ineffectual attempt to dislodge the French armada; shortly after which an American army of 16,000 men arrived at Williamsburg, and by the end

1781. of the month Cornwallis and his 7,000 troops were closely besieged by land and sea. Early in October a small British squadron reached New York, and on the 19th Clinton sailed to the aid of Cornwallis with twenty-six ships-of-the-line and 5,000 troops. On that very day Cornwallis, unable to prolong the defence, surrendered to the enemy.

This calamity, the most crushing recorded in the varied annals of the Army, is attributed by different critics to the rashness of Cornwallis, to the apathy of Clinton, to the negligence of Rodney, to the incapacity of Graves, and to the illusions and confusions of Germaine. Few will deny that all of these things, and especially the last, contributed to the result: but small causes produce momentous effects in war, and an apparently trivial act of disobedience on the part of two junior officers did more than all the mistakes of the commanders to blight the British hopes. In expectation of the arrival of de Grasse Admiral Graves had posted two vessels off the Chesapeake with orders to cruise outside and bring him early intelligence as to the numbers of the enemy; but both these ships were riding at anchor in the Bay when the French fleet appeared, with the result that de Grasse was easily able to prevent their escape. Had the British Admiral received the information with which he ought to have been furnished, he would have become aware, ere it was too late, of the unexpected strength of the main French fleet, and he would then have realised the immense importance of intercepting de Barras' squadron.[1] The destruction of those ships would have gone far to redress the balance of the fleets; the loss of the siege train which they carried would have greatly hampered the besieging army at Yorktown; and the failure of their *grand coup* might not at all improbably have strained to breaking-point the already tense relations of the Allies. The French were tired of the war, the

[1] Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power," p. 391.

cost of which had been swelled beyond all endurance by the demands of the impecunious Americans; and the Americans were dissatisfied both with the French and with themselves. Only a few months before Yorktown Washington had expressed his conviction that his country could not support another year of war, and that the short and stormy day of American Independence was fast drawing to a close.

The surrender of Yorktown put an end to the war in America, but the contest between England and her maritime foes endured for a year longer in European waters and in the Indian seas. In the West Indies [1] the British had met with almost consistent ill fortune. Santa Lucia had, indeed, been captured by Barrington in 1778, and Rodney, as we have seen, had struck a telling blow at St. Eustatius upon the declaration of war with Holland: but with these exceptions the British had been uniformly unsuccessful. Bouillé had captured Dominica in 1778, St. Vincent and Grenada had surrendered to d'Estaing in the following summer, and the year 1780, though marked by no further loss of territory, had witnessed a great destruction of British troops by sickness and hurricane. Despite the brilliant efforts of Sir Samuel Hood, the following year had been peculiarly disastrous, Florida being reoccupied by the Spaniards, and Tobago, St. Eustatius, St. Martin's, St. Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, Demerara, and Essequibo falling into French hands. Little was then left to England in the West Indies except Sta. Lucia and Jamaica; and Jamaica was jeopardised by the weakness of the garrison, the disloyalty of the inhabitants, and the formidable preparations of the enemy. Fifty ships-of-the-line and 20,000 troops were to be united for the Jamaica enterprise, and this union it was Rodney's business to prevent. Sailing from Europe in January, 1782, with twelve ships-of-the-line, Rodney (1781.)

[1] An enlarged map of the West Indies is given with the map of North America at p. 180.

1782. reached Barbados in February, and on the 25th of that month joined Hood off Antigua: the combined fleets then sailed to Sta. Lucia, where three more ships were awaiting them, raising their numbers to thirty-seven sail. Of the hostile forces a part was at Hayti; the rest, consisting of thirty-three ships-of-the-line and two 50-gun vessels, together with a large convoy, were at present at Martinique, on the way to the rendezvous. It would be the object of the French Admiral to avoid, and of the British to compel, an engagement.

Early in the morning of April 8 the British frigates on look-out duty off Martinique reported that the enemy were getting under way; whereupon Rodney at once proceeded to follow their example. At daybreak

April 9. the next morning the fleets found themselves abreast of one another off Dominica, the French nearer to the shore, and both becalmed. As the sun rose, the wind gradually freshened, but in uncertain and local puffs which favoured the vessels in-shore,—a circumstance of which de Grasse took advantage to debarrass himself of his convoy, which accordingly disappeared in the direction of Guadeloupe, and was no more seen. In the meantime both fleets had been availing themselves of the light airs to draw out into the open channel in the direction of the Saints Rocks, where the trade wind would blow more steadily. The British van of eight ships under Hood got clear at 9.30 A.M., and was at once approached by the leading vessels of the enemy's fleet, which, through their earlier enjoyment of the wind, were fourteen or fifteen in number. These vessels maintained a vigorous attack for an hour and a half, but they then noticed that eight more English ships, including the Admiral's flag-ship, had emerged into the zone of the steady wind, and seeing their retreat threatened, they fell back upon their main body. Of the French ships all were now clear of the land, whilst barely twenty of the British had got the wind, and these were in separate bodies divided by wide intervals from each

other and from the rest of the fleet; but de Grasse, not caring to run the hazard of a general engagement, flew the signal to withdraw from action. 1782.

Of the French vessels in action on April 9, one, the *Caton*, withdrew to Guadeloupe for repairs: on the

BATTLE OF THE SAINTS

A. *Zélé.*
B. Ships pursuing *Zélé.*
C. *Ville de Paris.*
D. *Formidable* (Rodney).

British side no damage was sustained that could not be made good at sea. During the night of the 10th the *Zélé* in de Grasse's fleet fouled one of her consorts, the *Jason*, which became unmanageable, whilst she her-

1782. self sustained such serious injuries that the whole of the French fleet was detained by her throughout the following day. During the night of the 11th she caused still further delay by colliding with her Admiral's flag-ship, and was then taken in tow by a frigate for removal to Guadeloupe. By these means the French, who had been inferior to the British by three ships-of-the-line when they left Martinique, were still further weakened by the loss of three men-of-war and a frigate. They possessed, however, certain advantages, individually and collectively, which were thought in some quarters to counterbalance their numerical inferiority: their ships were better found and easier to handle, their fleet speed was higher, and the weight of their armament was such as, even after the action of the 9th and their subsequent misfortunes, to give them an advantage in this respect over their more numerous opponents. Their Admiral's flag-ship, the *Ville de Paris*, the gift of the French capital to its King, carried no less than 110 guns, and was the finest ship the world had ever seen.

April 12. De Grasse had not yet rid himself of the luckless *Zélé*. At daylight on the 12th that vessel was descried by the English on her way to Guadeloupe, being then about equidistant from the two fleets and dead to leeward of the French, who were within a few miles of the Saints Rocks. By detaching four ships to go in chase of the *Zélé*, Rodney compelled the main fleet of the French to drop down to leeward, whilst his own ships stood in to meet it. Thanks to their superior speed the enemy were able to secure the weather-gauge and were to windward when about half-past eight the fleets began to drift past one another on opposite tacks. So light was the wind that the long lines of ships passed each other but slowly, and at nine o'clock Rodney's flagship had only just separated from the *Ville de Paris*. Five minutes later the wind, which had been variable all the morning, backed suddenly round to the south, straight ahead of the French; and the

centre and rear of the British line, luffing to the new breeze, passed in two compact divisions through the enemy's line. By this sudden manœuvre Rodney became in a moment the master of the situation, for he had severed the French fleet into confused and distant groups of ships, of which two in the centre, consisting, the one of four ships, the other of six, including the *Ville de Paris*, were exposed to the full fire of both British divisions. Whatever brave men could do, the crews of these hapless vessels did, but the odds against them were overwhelming, and they had no hope save in flight. The pursuit lasted till sunset. Not a single ship on the British side was lost, and their losses in killed and wounded amounted to less than 1,000 men. The losses of the enemy were not less than 9,000 men; the *Ville de Paris*, four other ships-of-the-line, and two smaller vessels were captured; and as a fighting force de Grasse's fleet was destroyed. 1782.

After this victory there was, with the exception of India, which will be dealt with in the next chapter, only one quarter in which England had any further calamity to apprehend. That quarter was the Mediterranean, where Minorca had already surrendered after an heroic resistance, and where the fate of the famous Rock itself hung trembling in the balance. The Spaniards, whose first act on the outbreak of war had been to invest Gibraltar, had been straining every nerve to re-capture the great fortress. Since General Elliot had taken over the command in 1777 much had been done to improve the fortifications; but the garrison was becoming insufficient, and fuel and powder were running short, when Rodney put in on his way to the West Indies in January, 1780. The Spanish operations had been conducted with energy; strong fortified lines had been constructed across the isthmus; and a daring attack with ships-of-the-line, fire-ships, and galleys had been delivered in June, 1780, which it had taxed the skill and courage of the little

1781. squadron in the harbour to repel. Since that time every approach to the beleaguered fortress had been narrowly watched by Spanish cruisers, and in the early months of 1781 the scanty numbers of the garrison had been still further reduced by a devastating epidemic
April. of scurvy, due to lack of supplies. This trouble had been overcome by the arrival of a large British convoy, but it had been immediately followed by a tremendous bombardment, which continued unceasingly for thirteen months: one hundred and seventy cannon and eighty mortars played upon the fortress; and it was said that upwards of seventy-five thousand projectiles were hurled against it during the first six weeks alone. If the besiegers hoped to shake the nerve of the garrison by such means, they must have been undeceived by an episode which occurred when the bombardment had reached its eighth month. During the night of November 26–27 two thousand of Elliot's men crept out from the Rock to the Spanish lines, spiked twenty-eight guns and mortars, blew up several magazines, and burnt to the ground a number of elaborate wooden batteries which had been over a year in building. This daring exploit they performed at a cost of thirty men killed and wounded.

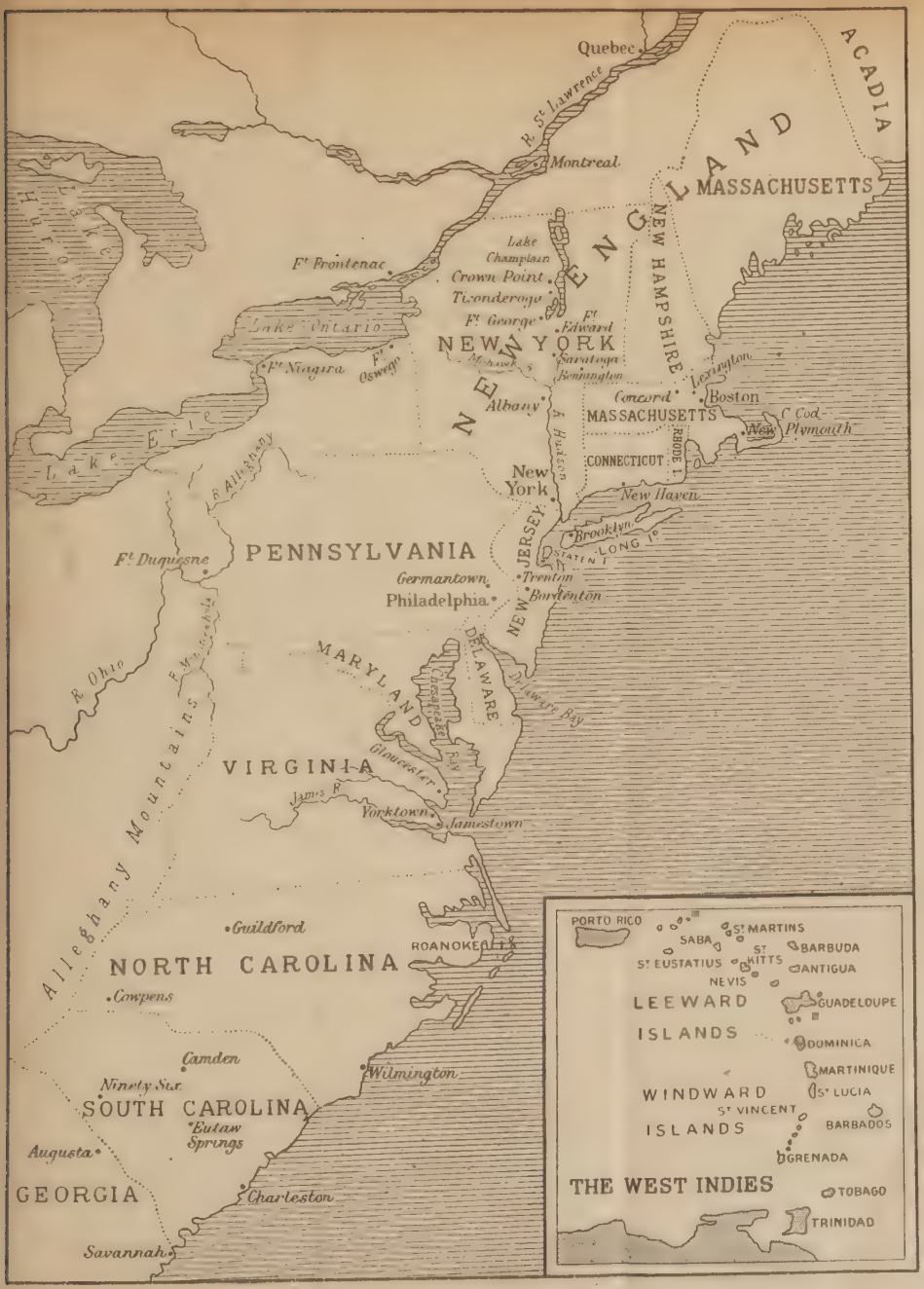
1782. In the summer of 1782 the French and the Spaniards determined to make a last desperate effort to capture the fortress. Their land forces were increased to a strength of 40,000 men, and they were encouraged by the presence of more than one Royal Prince, of several distinguished foreigners, and of many of their own nobles, amongst the latter being the Duc de Crillon with the laurels of Minorca fresh upon him. The Allied force at sea consisted of forty-seven ships-of-the line, of innumerable small craft, and of ten floating batteries, invented and constructed for the occasion, which carried two hundred and twelve heavy guns and were believed to be invulnerable. The British force on the Rock consisted at the time of 7,000 men with ninety-six guns.

The mighty onslaught from which so much was 1782.
hoped and feared was delivered on September 13. At seven o'clock in the morning of that day the floating batteries got under way, and sailing in advance of the fleet, took up their allotted positions under the walls. Here they became forthwith the targets of every gun on the Rock, but little effect seemed to be produced on them until the British gunners began to load with red-hot shot, when smoke was soon seen to issue from the Admiral's battery and from that of his second in command. The conflagration was kept under during the afternoon, but the efforts of the enemy slackened perceptibly, and towards evening many small boats put off to the assistance of the batteries, braving the fury of the storm of red-hot shot. Shortly before midnight the wreck of a launch drifted ashore. An hour later the flag-ship of the battery squadron burst into flames, and before morning the whole flotilla was burning furiously. Thus with the loss of 2,300 besiegers, and of ninety besieged, ended the gigantic effort, and Gibraltar was safe once more from every peril but hunger. This danger also passed away with the arrival of provision-ships on October 11; and in the beginning of February, 1783, came tidings that peace had been signed at Versailles. The siege had lasted for three years, seven months, and twelve days.

To those who recalled the terms which England had obtained at the close of Pitt's war, the Peace of Versailles appeared a sore humiliation. The independence of the American Colonies was, of course, the cardinal feature of the treaties. France retained or acquired Sta. Lucia and Tobago, Senegal and Goree, and the small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon; she also obtained permission to fish off Newfoundland, to fortify Dunkirk, and to re-establish commercial posts in India: and East Florida and Minorca were ceded to Spain. But England received back all else that had

been taken from her in the war, and her flag continued to wave over Gibraltar, which the Spaniards had squandered so much blood and money to regain. Such terms cannot justly be called humiliating to England when it is remembered that, with Ireland disloyal and the West Indies treacherous, she had faced unaided her thirteen revolted Colonies, her three most powerful European rivals, and the most formidable native enemy she had ever encountered in India. And although under certain aspects the story of the American Revolution may be disquieting to the student of Imperial relations and organisation as they exist at the present time, it possesses at least one feature of happy augury for the future. "There were brave and honest men in America who were proud of the great and free empire to which they belonged, who had no desire to shrink from the burden of maintaining it, who remembered with gratitude all the English blood that had been shed around Quebec and Montreal, and who, with nothing to hope for from the Crown, were prepared to face the most brutal mob violence and the invectives of a scurrilous Press, to risk their fortunes, their reputations, and sometimes even their lives, in order to avert civil war and ultimate separation. . . . They comprised some of the best and ablest men America has ever produced, and they were contending for an ideal which was at least as worthy as that for which Washington fought. It was the maintenance of one free, industrial, and pacific empire, comprising the whole English race, holding the richest plains of Asia in subjection, blending all that was most venerable in an ancient civilisation with the redundant energies of a youthful society, and likely in a few generations to outstrip every competitor and acquire an indisputable ascendancy on the globe."[1]

[1] Lecky, "History of England," ch. xi.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CHAPTER VIII

INDIA. 1763–1793

Shah Alum marches on Patna—Knox marches to the relief of the city — His victory at Beerpore — Meer Cossim — British disaster at Patna — Major Thomas Adams takes the field—Oondwa Nullah—Coalition against the British—Major Hector Munro suppresses a Sepoy mutiny—His victory at Buxar—Southern India: Hyder Ali—British successes—Hyder takes the field—Colonel Baillie's march — Disaster to his force—Coote's operations — Porto Novo — Suffren sails for India—Porto Praya—Suffren and Hughes—Last operations of Coote — General Stuart besieges Cuddalore — Suffren's activity — His third engagement with Hughes—Peace between England and France—Cornwallis invades Mysore—Suffren — Warren Hastings.

We took leave of the East India Company in the spring of 1761, at which time it had been delivered from European competition by the collapse of the French. It had not yet seen the last of those redoubtable rivals in India, but it is with wars against native princes that our narrative is immediately concerned. In placing Meer Jaffier under their protection on the throne of Bengal, the Company had bound itself to espouse his quarrels, of which there was likely to be an abundance, seeing that his neighbours, the Emperor, the Nabob of Oude, and the Mahrattas, were all greedy of empire and not averse to war. The Emperor, Shah Alum, had already shown his hand, and in the last weeks of 1759 he advanced for the second time against the Nabob's dominions. When the Moghul army reached Patna in February, 1760, the Nabob's Governor in that city most imprudently attacked it forthwith, instead of awaiting the arrival Feb. 9, 1760.

1760. of a British force under Major Caillaud, which was known to be marching to his relief. The result was disastrous to him, and the more so that the small detachment of British troops at Patna was destroyed in an attempt to save him from defeat. Had the Emperor followed up his success vigorously, Patna would then have fallen into his hands; fortunately, however, he was still languidly besieging the place when Caillaud arrived and in a few hours dispersed his host.

Caillaud would have made short work of Shah Alum after the battle of Seerpore, if he had been free to act according to his own wishes; but he was so seriously delayed by the dilatoriness of his colleague, Meerun, the son of Meer Jaffier, that the Emperor was able to re-assemble his forces without molestation. He then set himself to entice the British onwards in pursuit, and, this done, he doubled swiftly back upon Patna, where a body of French adventurers under M. Law, who had thrown in their lot with him, were already before the city, in numbers superior to those of the feeble garrison. Caillaud did not grasp the situation in time to overtake Shah Alum, but he sent a message to Captain Knox at Burdwan, to take 200 British troops, a battalion of Sepoys, and two guns, and do what he could to save the threatened city, where the position of the two brave and able officers who were struggling to hold it—one of them an English doctor named Fullerton, the other a Hindoo called Shitab Roy—was growing hourly more precarious. Knox rose nobly to the occasion. Marching every inch of the way on his own feet at the head of his little column, he covered in thirteen days the 300 miles of sun-scorched roads that separated him from Patna; on the night of his arrival
April 29. he crept out in the darkness to reconnoitre the enemy's position; and at noon on the morrow he surprised and put to flight the whole Moghul army, capturing their camp with all its contents. The moment the Emperor's

back was turned, however, a new enemy appeared upon the scene; and with him also was Knox's little band called upon to deal, as Caillaud was still too far away to help. The Nabob of Purneah, Kuddum Hoosein, one of Meer Jaffier's vassals, had deemed the moment suitable for throwing off his allegiance, and was now on the way to join Shah Alum. It was clear to Knox that this union must be prevented at all costs, and on June 15 he crossed the Ganges to the bank along which the Nabob was advancing, hoping to surprise him by a forced march at night. He was disappointed in this hope by the stupidity of his guides, who led him astray, and on the following morning, just as his weary men had returned to camp from their long hours of fruitless marching, the enemy appeared upon the scene. The Nabob's force consisted of 16,000 men with thirty guns: Knox had five guns and 1,100 tired soldiers. Nothing daunted, however, he selected his ground, and having formed his little band in a hollow square, he calmly awaited attack. The action began at 6 A.M., and for six long hours the Nabob's cavalry hurled themselves against the square in frantic efforts to break its formation: but charge after charge was repelled, and at midday the Nabob gave the order to retreat, leaving Knox victorious on the field of Beerpore. After their encounters with Knox neither the Emperor nor the Nabob of Purneah had much wish to prolong hostilities, and at the end of January, 1761, peace between the Moghul and the Company was signed.

1760. June 16.

In the meantime the authorities at Calcutta had been engaged in striking a bargain with respect to the throne of Bengal which was destined to turn out less to their advantage than was anticipated: in consideration of substantial bribes and concessions they deposed the old Nabob, Meer Jaffier, and installed his son-in-law, Meer Cossim, in his place. The new ruler was ambitious and able, and, despite the questionable steps by which he had risen, he was resolved to do better

both for himself and for his people than his predecessors had done. His first care was to provide himself with an army trained and equipped after the fashion of the Company's troops, by whom he had seen such marvellous feats performed; and with this object in view he established a cannon foundry, enlisted a regiment of European gunners, and raised 25,000 native troops whom he officered with European adventurers under the command of an Alsatian, known as Sumroo, and two Armenians, called Markar and Aratoon. Having taken these precautions, he thought it safe to give the rein to his reforming ardour, and sent notice to the Company that he contemplated the abolition of certain trade privileges which had been scandalously
1763. abused by their servants. When this intimation reached the Calcutta authorities, the audacity of it fairly took their breath away; but so great had the confidence of the British in India become that, with an empty treasury and an army barely 8,000 strong, they prepared unhesitatingly for a war with a prince who was known to possess large quantities of money and stores and a disciplined army of 40,000 men.

At the outset of the campaign the British commanders acted with their accustomed gallantry, but with something less than their accustomed discretion. On the morning of June 25 the troops in the Company's factory near Patna surprised and occupied the city, encountering no resistance except from a weak force of Meer Cossim's troops posted in the citadel: but instead of finishing off the work thoroughly and at once, the officers returned to the factory to breakfast, and the men dispersed in quest of plunder. While they were thus occupied, Meer Cossim's general, Markar, who knew of the contemplated attack on Patna and had hurried up to frustrate it, arrived before the gates, attacked and defeated the small guard on duty there, and reoccupied the city. He then attacked the factory, where the British had taken refuge, and pressed them

so hard that they decided to retreat. On the 29th 1763.
they crossed the Ganges, closely followed by Markar; and on July 1 at Manjee they discovered that another detachment under Sumroo, which had been marching to intercept them, had occupied the road in front. Instead of hurling himself boldly against Sumroo, the officer in command awaited attack, which was promptly delivered by the enemy in overwhelming strength, and after a brief struggle every man in the British force was captured or killed.

Of the 8,000 men with whom the Company had proposed to fight Meer Cossim, fully a quarter was thus destroyed, and of the remainder by no means all were ready to take the field. In July Major Thomas Adams, to whom the command had been given, was able to leave Calcutta with 2,350 troops, of whom 1,500 were Sepoys; and he instructed a detachment of 200 European and 1,000 Sepoy infantry, with two troops of British and native horse, to come from Patna and meet him at Moorshedabad. This junction Meer Cossim determined, if possible, to prevent, and in the neighbourhood of Cutwa Adams was confronted by a large force, containing some of Meer Cossim's best soldiers and commanded by one of his ablest generals. On July 19 Adams attacked this force, and defeated it after a stubborn engagement. Without attempting to hold Moorshedabad, the enemy then fell back upon an entrenched position at Sooty, where Meer Cossim himself was in command, at the head of 40,000 men. Picking up reinforcements at Moorshedabad which raised his numbers to 5,000 men, of whom 1,000 were Europeans, Adams pressed on towards Sooty, and on August 2 encountered Meer Cossim, who had advanced to meet him. Again, thanks to his own courage and skill and to the splendid steadiness of his men, Adams triumphed despite the enormous odds against him; and driving his beaten enemies headlong through their own entrenched lines at Sooty, pursued them to the famous

1763. pass of Oondwa Nullah, where a more determined resistance was likely to be made.

The position occupied by Meer Cossim's army was one of the strongest that can be imagined. At Oondwa Nullah the high-road ran through a gorge between the Ganges and the hills, which nowhere attained to a width of over a mile and in many places was considerably narrower; and across this gorge the Nabob had constructed a line of entrenchments that carried a hundred guns and consisted of ramparts sixty feet thick and ten feet high, surmounted by a parapet eighteen feet thick and seven feet high, and protected in front by a ditch sixty feet wide containing twelve feet of water. The position was still further strengthened by certain natural features, such as the Nullah brook with precipitous banks, a steep hill, and a deep morass; and it was occupied by a huge army comprising the trained brigades of Markar, Sumroo, and Aratoon. Adams, as we have seen, could muster no more than 5,000 men.

On August 11 the British pitched their camp within a few miles of the enemy, and set to work forthwith upon batteries and trenches; but their progress was necessarily slow, and when at last on September 4 the guns opened fire, they could make no impression on the enemy's massive works. That very day, however, a proposal was made to Adams fraught with great possibilities. A deserter from the Company's service came across from Meer Cossim's camp and promised in exchange for a free pardon to guide the British across the morass. Adams closed with the suggestion and quickly made his plans. Captain James Irving, with 1,000 grenadiers and Sepoys, was to sally forth in the darkness, ford the morass, and seize the steep hill which commanded the whole position: this done, he was to flash a torch, at sight of which the rest of the army would advance along the high-road against the centre of the lines or any other vulnerable spot.

"Punctually at the appointed time Irving's column, carrying scaling-ladders with it, moved off in all possible silence through the darkness, and headed by the deserter plunged straight into the swamp. The passage was harder than any had suspected. It is not easy to realise the trial of these thousand faithful men as they floundered, knee-deep, waist-deep, shoulder-deep, through that terrible half-mile of morass, their pouches on their heads, and their muskets held high in air; with no sound but the dull heavy splashing of their own advance, stilled or broken from time to time by hoarse whispers of warning or command, and with the haunting dread ever about them that their guide might be playing them false. At length the treacherous ground was passed; and with a last command to his men on no account to fire but to trust solely to the bayonet, Irving led his party forward to the edge of the entrenchments. All was quiet; for the enemy reckoned their position so strong as to need no watching, and the officers were more occupied with wine and dancing-girls than with military vigilance. No ditch had been dug before the rampart on the hills; so the attacking force silently planted their ladders and scaled it without trouble. Then Irving, perceiving that he was close to the isolated hill and that it was strongly stockaded, rightly judged it to be the key of the position, and resolved to carry it by surprise. Several of the enemy were found asleep under the parapet as the British advanced, but these were secured without noise by a hand pressed over their mouths and a bayonet thrust into their hearts; and the grenadiers were already swarming up the steep ascent to the stockade, when suddenly the alarm was given. It came too late. The grenadiers dashed forward with the Sepoys hard at their heels, the stockade was captured with a rush, and not a man of the enemy within it left alive. Then the darkness was broken by the flash of flint and steel, and a torch held high aloft leaped suddenly into flame,

1763. Sept. 5.

1763. shedding wild light on huddled corpses and reddened bayonets and dripping, mud-stained, panting men."[1]

With an answering flash from the British cannon below, the main body hastened forward, whilst Irving rushed down from the hill. There was little thought of resistance among the distracted enemy. The few disciplined troops who attempted to hold their ground were speedily overpowered by the converging British columns, who then desisted from pursuit; but so deeply had terror possessed Meer Cossim's troops that in huge, panic-stricken masses they rushed blindly to destruction, either in the narrow rivulet, or in the broad stream of Ganges, or amongst the rugged and precipitous hills.

1764. The gallant and skilful officer to whom the Bengal army was indebted for this astonishing career of triumph

Jan. now returned to Calcutta, there, alas, to die exhausted by the strain which he had undergone. Two dangers awaited his successors. The first of these was a mutiny amongst the troops provoked by the rapacity of the Calcutta authorities, who had pledged themselves to reward the army handsomely, but who did not scruple to evade their obligations as soon as the crisis was past. Fortunately for them, Meer Jaffier, whom they had reinstated, advanced £10,000 for distribution among the troops, whereby that difficulty was happily surmounted. The other proved more formidable. During the late contest with Meer Cossim, the Nabob of Oude, Shuja Dowlah, who had long looked with covetous eyes upon Bengal, had prepared his army for the field, in order that he might be ready to fall upon the victor and appropriate the prize to himself. He had been joined at Lucknow by Shah Alum, the Emperor, and after Oondwa Nullah he had met Meer Cossim at Allahabad and beguiled him into joining the allies. The combined forces then advanced to Patna, and there on May 3 attacked and partially defeated the British under the walls of the city.

[1] Fortescue, "British Army," vol. i. p. 407.

Fortunately for the British a very capable officer, 1764.
Major Hector Munro, now arrived upon the scene, whose first care was to purge his force of the spirit of insubordination which, temporarily allayed by Meer Jaffier's douceur, had become rife again in the disastrous interval of inactivity and defeat. The measures which he adopted, whatever else may be thought of them, were at all events drastic. The senior Sepoy battalion having mutinied, the ringleaders, twenty-four in number, were immediately seized and condemned to be blown from the cannon's mouth in the presence of the whole army. When the hour of execution arrived, four of the condemned claimed that, as grenadiers to whom the post of honour was due, they were entitled to be dealt with first. The favour was granted, and all four of them were blown to fragments. A shudder of horror ran through the troops at the spectacle, and the officers of the Sepoy regiments hastened to Munro to warn him that their men were rapidly getting out of control. Munro, however, was not to be deterred. Telling the Europeans to load their weapons, he went in person to the head of the Sepoy battalion. Then in decisive tones the familiar words of command rang out. "Ground arms." Every Sepoy weapon was grounded. "Quick march." And away went the Sepoys, empty-handed, whilst the Europeans marched forward to separate them from their arms. The execution then proceeded, and the Sepoys took the terrible lesson to heart: severity, as Munro well knew, is in the end the truest kindness.

With the tone of his army thus restored, Munro on October 6 started in pursuit of the enemy, who had withdrawn to an entrenched camp at Buxar. He reached the place on the 22nd, intending to rest his men for thirty-six hours before attacking; but on the following morning Shuja Dowlah advanced from his lines to offer battle. The position occupied by the Nabob was a strong one, and the British as usual were

1764. outnumbered by eight or nine to one; but Munro lost no time in taking up the challenge. His men, as they advanced, were attacked furiously by Shuja's cavalry in front, in flank, and in rear; but the charges were repulsed with tremendous loss, and the British line swept on unchecked. Seeing how the day was going, Shuja Dowlah with his bodyguard and treasure hastened across a bridge of boats which spanned a broad and miry stream in rear of his position; and as soon as he had been safely followed by Sumroo's trained brigades, he ordered this bridge to be destroyed, to save himself from pursuit. Scarcely had the command been obeyed when the rest of his army, breaking before the British advance, rushed wildly for the spot where the bridge had stood. Bewildered by its disappearance, and thrust forward by panic-stricken mobs behind, those who came first to the bank plunged into the quagmire, followed blindly by those behind; and ever, as the foremost sank, came others to trample them down, until at last a solid causeway of corpses stretched for three hundred yards across the stream, over which the rearmost were able to escape. Thus in a scene of destruction unparalleled in all the bloody annals of war closed the battle of Buxar. Plunder to the value of £12,000 and 167 guns fell into the hands of the victors; and the confederacy was crushed. The Emperor surrendered shortly after the battle; the luckless Meer Cossim had already been ruined by his allies; and after the loss of Benares, Chunar, and Allahabad, which fell in rapid succession, the Nabob of Oude followed the Emperor's example, and threw himself upon the mercy of the conquerors. Thus after another five years of desperate conflict was peace once more restored in the North.

No sooner was the Company freed from anxiety on the score of Bengal than it was faced by a fresh crop of dangers in Southern India. In that quarter three considerable native powers, the perfidious Nizam Ali, who had seized the Deccan, the warlike Mahrattas, and

the astute Hyder Ali of Mysore, were all on the watch for an opportunity of overthrowing the British; and the situation was the more alarming that the French flag, which British soldiers had so gloriously hauled down in the last French war, had been tamely re-hoisted by the British politicians who had negotiated the Peace of Paris. The full danger of the British position was now about to be revealed by the energy and enterprise of Hyder Ali. Of humble birth and no education, Hyder Ali had entered the Mysorean army when a lad; had exhibited unmistakable talents for war; had risen rapidly to high rank; and then, after the fashion of Oriental military adventurers, had snatched the sceptre from the feeble grasp of an incompetent sovereign. Instead of cultivating this new power as a useful counterpoise to the restless Mahratta tribes, the British gave ear to the Nizam, who was at war with Mysore, and most foolishly determined to espouse his cause: whereupon Hyder contrived to buy off the Nizam, and turned his arms against the Company with such success that in April, 1768, the Madras Council was constrained to sue for peace. Inspired by this humiliation the Presidential Governments then embarked upon a tortuous and dishonourable policy, destined in less than a decade to bring British power in India to the verge of destruction. It was not only expedient but absolutely necessary to support Hyder against the Mahrattas after the treaty with Mysore, for by the terms of that treaty the contracting parties had bound themselves to furnish mutual aid in case of attack; but twice over was Hyder involved in war with his turbulent neighbours, and twice over did the Madras Council unblushingly evade its obligations. Something might have been forgiven to them, if in betraying one of the combatants they had conciliated the other; but when Hyder emerged victorious from his second struggle in 1775, vowing vengeance against his perfidious allies, the Mahrattas were in-

furiated by the intervention of the British in a quarrel of theirs in Tanjore and by acts of wanton and futile aggression in the North. Such was the situation in India when the revolt of the American Colonies plunged the world in war.

1778. The declaration of war between England and France became known in India on August 7, 1778. Three days
Aug. 10. later a naval action took place which led to the retirement of the French squadron, whereupon Sir Hector Munro marched out with the Madras army against the French settlements. By the end of the year all these had been captured with the exception of Mahé on the Malabar coast, and Mahé was marked down for a similar fate. The British, however, were now to pay the penalty of their treachery to Hyder Ali, who gave notice that Mahé was under his protection, and that if they should venture to attack it, he would not only undertake the defence himself, but would vent his displeasure on their own possessions. Ignoring these menaces, the British laid siege to the place, and in March, 1779, pulled down the flags of France and Mysore which had waved side by side on the walls. Envoys were then despatched to Seringapatam in the vain hope of pacifying the Sultan,
1780. who sternly commanded them to return to those that
April. sent them with the message that "the sovereign of Mysore no longer trusted in the sincerity and good faith of the British."

A few weeks passed during which the Mysorean army prepared to take the field, and then the gathering storm burst in unexampled fury upon the Carnatic. In June Hyder marched from Bangalore with 90,000 troops of all arms, trained and armed for the most part in European fashion. In July he entered the plains, and the terrified inhabitants of Madras looked out upon a vast expanse of blazing villages and trampled crops, uninhabited by man or beast save by Hyder's devastating hordes. The military problem by which Munro was faced was one of extreme difficulty, for the

British being taken by surprise, their detachments were widely separated, and each was overshadowed by a superior hostile force; Munro himself with 5,000 men at Madras was watched by Hyder, who also threatened Colonel Braithwaite's force of 1,500 at Pondicherry; Tippoo Sahib, one of Hyder's sons, had hastened northwards against a division of 2,800 under Colonel Baillie at Guntoor; and another son, Kurreem Sahib, had placed himself at Porto Novo so as to cut off the 2,000 Sepoys who were under Colonel Cosby at Trichinopoly. Munro's first object was to join hands with Baillie, and for some inscrutable reason he ordered that officer to meet him at Conjeveram, an unfortified town in the centre of the district occupied by the enemy. Baillie accordingly marched southwards, and on August 24 was within thirty miles of Madras, which he could have reached in perfect safety, as Hyder at the moment was out of the way at Arcot; but in obedience to Munro's orders he had to make for Conjeveram. To that place the General himself proceeded on the 26th, and was at once followed thither by Hyder, who returned hurriedly from Arcot, at the same time despatching Tippoo's force of 11,000 men to intercept Baillie. That officer reached Parambakum, fourteen miles distant from Conjeveram, on September 6, and was there attacked by Tippoo's division. He was able to repulse the assault, and was joined three days later by a reinforcement of 1,000 men from Munro's army; but he was ignorant of the ground and afraid to move except by daylight. Accordingly on the evening of that day he bivouacked where he was for the night, and at dawn on the following morning resumed his march. At a distance of two miles from his camp the road he was following led through an avenue of trees onto an open plain of some extent, in the middle of which was a village, distant about five furlongs from the end of the avenue; and here, when about one half of the British had emerged onto the plain, Tippoo's 1780.

1780. guns opened fire. For a time Baillie continued his advance without paying heed to the fire, but he was presently compelled to reply with his own artillery and to send forward his Sepoys to capture the hostile guns. This the Sepoys easily accomplished, but they neglected to spike their captures, which was to prove a fatal omission, for in the meantime the Mysorean horse had charged along the British flank, and had then circled round the rear, so as to threaten the advanced body of Sepoys. The Sepoys, seeing their retreat thus threatened, retired precipitately, but they were intercepted and cut to pieces; whereupon the enemy regained their guns and resumed the cannonade.

All this time Baillie's men had looked confidently for the coming of Munro, and at the end of an hour a loud shout of triumph rose from the British ranks, as to the sound of the Grenadiers' March long columns of red-coated troops began to issue from the village in front. But the red-coats were not their comrades; they were the regular forces of Hyder, who had left a corps of observation at Conjeveram, and hurried with the whole of the rest of his army to the assistance of Tippoo. The deception was a bitter one for Baillie, whose division was now completely surrounded and raked by the cross-fire of over sixty guns. Bidding his men lie down on the ground in a hollow square, Baillie grimly awaited the onslaught of the Mysorean horse, who charged again and again but could make no impression on the unwavering square. Presently, however, a company of Europeans was ordered to reinforce the rear face of the square, and the Sepoys, unnerved by the artillery fire, rose with them and fell back in disorder. The confusion was marked by one of Hyder's cavalry leaders, who was burning to wipe out a reproach he had incurred in the eyes of his sovereign; and with the reckless daring of despair he charged madly into the broken British ranks, instantly completing the

panic of the Sepoys, who in abject terror threw down their arms and fled from the field. Even then the few hundred Europeans who were left continued to stand around their commander with muskets raised and ranks unbroken; but Baillie, aware of the folly of further resistance, and reluctant to sacrifice brave lives in vain, raised his handkerchief in token of surrender. A solemn oath was sworn that the lives of the survivors should be spared, and at a word from Baillie they grounded their arms. But the Mysorean horse, who had been terribly punished in the battle, had become maddened beyond all control, and in a frenzy of bloodthirsty rage swarmed onwards to renew the carnage. When at length Hyder Ali, moved by the prayers and reproaches of his French officers, gave orders for the massacre to be stayed, there existed of Baillie's 3,700 men only 34 officers and 200 privates, scarcely any of whom were unhurt. Near by this terrible scene the victor of Buxar, now so unworthy of himself, had been marching aimlessly to and fro, without making a single effort to succour the division which his wilful blundering had jeopardised; and on the day which followed the disaster he sank his guns and baggage in a tank and withdrew ignominiously to Madras. 1780. Sept. 11.

When the melancholy tidings of these events reached Calcutta, the Governor-General, Hastings, with true insight, determined that peace with the Mahrattas must be made at any price, and that every available British soldier in India must be hurried to the Carnatic. Sir Eyre Coote, the veteran victor of Wandewash, was appointed to the supreme command, and was freed, so far as it lay in the power of Hastings to free him, from the interference of the miserable Madras Government. He reached Madras on November 5, with two companies of artillery and a weak battalion of infantry, and with the promise of six Sepoy battalions and sixteen guns to follow; but so miserably deficient was the whole army in the barest necessaries of a field force that

Madras could hardly have been saved, had Hyder
Sept. 1780–Jan. 1781. resolutely advanced against it, instead of wasting time over the reduction of smaller English posts. By the
1781. middle of January Coote, by vigorous exertions, had made good some of the deficiencies of his force, and on the 17th, relying on the sea for the carriage of supplies which he could not take by land, he marched southwards from Madras with 1,600 Europeans, 5,000 Sepoys, and four regiments of native horse. Relieving Chingleput, and retaking Carangooly, which had been captured by the enemy, Coote on January 24 arrived at Wandewash, where an indomitable officer, Captain Flint, had undertaken the defence with only one European to help him, and mounting his own guns, training his own gunners, and making his own powder, had contrived for a period of eighteen months to repulse every assault of a numerous and well-equipped enemy. There, however, very grave tidings awaited the British commander: Hyder had followed him rapidly southwards, and in the absence of the British fleet at Bombay a French squadron with troops on board had appeared off Madras and intercepted his supplies. Coote's first instinct, when he heard of the arrival of this squadron, was to retreat with all haste upon his base; but in the false hope of finding provisions he continued to push on, and passing Pondicherry, which turned out to be
Feb. 8. empty of supplies, he halted at Cuddalore, with provisions for a few days at most, with no prospect of adding to his scanty store, and with every line of advance blocked by Hyder's troops. For five terrible days Coote lay at Cuddalore, with nothing to hope for but famine for his army and ruin for the British cause. Then for some inexplicable reason the French squad-
Feb. 13. ron sailed away, and Coote could breathe freely once again.

The folly of the French naval commander relieved the British of their most pressing peril, but the army was out of spirits and out of health, and was still re-

stricted in its movements by want of transport. Several 1781.
months were accordingly passed in inactivity, and it was not till June that Coote determined to resume his march to the southwards and attack Chillumbrum. An attempt to surprise the place having failed, Coote retired to Porto Novo, where he met Admiral Hughes and discussed with him a project for a formal siege. Scarcely was the plan settled when news was received that Hyder Ali, cleverly divining the intentions of the British, had marched rapidly to the aid of his threatened post, and was now stationed within a few miles of Porto Novo, between Coote and the British base at Cuddalore, with his right resting on an impenetrable tangle of ravines, his left abutting on a ridge of sandhills which skirted the shore, and his centre supported by a huge semi-circle of trenches and redoubts. When Coote advanced in the early morning of July 1 and inspected July 1.
this position, he immediately perceived that Hyder could only be dislodged by a turning movement directed against his left and executed by the seizure of the sandhills. Accordingly about nine o'clock he led his men northwards in two columns, and advancing under cover of the sandhills, left one column to clear the hills on the enemy's right, and himself continued his advance against their left. The plan was sound, and was executed with admirable firmness and precision by both divisions; and at four o'clock in the afternoon, after a prolonged cannonade, which did little harm to the British, and a few equally ineffective cavalry charges, Hyder was compelled to retire. The British cause was not yet lost when an aged General and 7,500 troops could dislodge a disciplined army of 80,000 men from a carefully chosen and heavily entrenched position with the skill and ease that had marked Coote's movements at Porto Novo. Hyder himself was mortified and despondent; and after an indecisive action with Coote on August 27 on the ground where Baillie's unhappy division had met its doom, he allowed himself to be

1781. again defeated with heavy loss at Sholinghur on September 27. Thoroughly demoralised by these reverses, he then turned his back on Madras and led his army to the Malabar coast; but almost before the British had realised that they were rid of him, another enemy appeared upon the scene.

On March 22, 1781, the day on which de Grasse had left Brest for the West Indies, there had sailed in his company a squadron of five ships-of-the-line, with a few transports, under the command of a captain named Suffren, who had already made himself remarkable by his coolness of judgment and his ardour in battle. It had come to the knowledge of the French Government that a British expedition was intended against the Dutch Colony at the Cape of Good Hope, and the frustration of this enterprise was to be Suffren's first care; that done, he was to proceed to the East Indian seas. Separating from de Grasse's fleet on March 29, Suffren pursued his way southwards, and on the 16th of the following month, being then in the neighbourhood of Porto Praya, in the Cape Verde Islands, and knowing one of his consorts to be short of water, he stood in for the anchorage, sending a look-out vessel ahead of him. This vessel presently signalled that enemy's ships were in the bay. They turned out to be the British squadron and convoy on the way to the Cape; and it was soon seen that their commander, Commodore Johnstone, had allowed them to anchor in no kind of fighting order. Had Suffren regarded the immemorial traditions of his service which enjoined the duty of saving ships and securing ports rather than the glory of bringing hostile fleets to battle, he would have hastened on to the Cape, thanking God that he was rid of a knave: but he had formed his own views on the functions of fleets and the real use of sea power, and without a moment's hesitation he bore down to attack. His hope was to profit by the surprise and confusion of the British so far as to cripple their fleet

and save the Cape of Good Hope at the Cape Verde Islands; and in this he was not disappointed, though he was deprived of a decisive victory by the failure of his captains to carry out his intentions. Enough, however, had been done: Johnstone thought himself obliged to return to England; and Suffren, no longer feeling anxiety on the score of the Cape, proceeded to the Coromandel coast. 1781.

Arriving at Madras on February 15, 1782, with reinforcements picked up at the Isle of France which brought his squadron up to a strength of twelve ships-of-war, Suffren found an English fleet of nine ships, commanded by Sir Edward Hughes, anchored there in order under the guns of the fort. The position defied attack, but he knew that Hughes, with many vulnerable points to guard, would be compelled to keep him in sight, and in the afternoon he stood out to sea: whereupon the British followed him, as he anticipated. During the night his convoy became separated from him, and on the following morning was chased by Hughes, who captured six ships. Hughes, however, was in his turn pursued by Suffren, and with such success that on the 17th he found himself to leeward of the French and within striking distance, being thereby compelled to wait attack. The advantage was appreciated to the full by Suffren, who availed himself of the light wind and of his own position to isolate three of Hughes's ships and to concentrate his twelve vessels upon the six remaining British ships; and his opinion was that he must inevitably have destroyed the entire British squadron, had not his signals to close been misunderstood or ignored by his captains. As it turned out, no great damage was done, and the British having been enabled to draw away by a change in the wind and being no longer in sight the next morning, Suffren convoyed his transports to Pondicherry, and then sailed for Trincomalee, whither his enemy had gone to refit. There on April 12 he again fell in with Hughes, and 1782.

1782. by a happy concentration on the British centre and rear did great damage to one or two of Hughes's ships, more especially the *Monmouth*, although no decisive results attended the engagement.

Since all operations on shore depended upon the control of the sea, Coote had been forced to remain inactive, awaiting the issue of the duel between Suffren and Hughes; and his temper had been sorely tried by the conduct of the Governor of Madras, who quite unbeknown to the Commander-in-Chief had diverted valuable troops to comparatively unimportant enterprises of his own devising.[1] In the middle of May news reached the General that Hyder had returned to the coast, had combined with a French division landed by Suffren, and was menacing the British posts at Permacol and Wandewash. On receipt of this intelligence Coote at once advanced, not in time to save Permacol, which fell on May 16, but soon enough to secure Wandewash: this done, he lured Hyder into the open by an adroit move upon his supply depôt at Arnee, and once again defeated him by the skill of his manœuvres. As usual, however, he was too weak in cavalry and transport to follow up his victory, in addition to which he was much hampered by an epidemic among
June 18. his white soldiers. Worse than that, the long strain of Coote's heart-breaking labours had told severely upon a constitution enfeebled by age and by long service in an unhealthy climate, and at the end of the campaign he retired to Bengal to recruit, hoping to resume his command in the following spring; but three
April 27, days after his return to Madras he died. Brigadier-
1783. General James Stuart, upon whom the command devolved, designed to effect the recapture of Cuddalore, which was now occupied by a French force under the veteran Comte de Bussy, who had just returned from Europe to the scene of his old triumphs, and who had

[1] The captures of Negapatam (November 12, 1781) and Trincomalee (January 11, 1782), alluded to in the preceding chapter.

been joined at Cuddalore by Tippoo, now the sovereign of Mysore, the redoubtable Hyder having expired on December 7, 1782. Stuart reached Cuddalore on June 7, and took up a position about two miles to the south of the walls: whereupon the French, who were quite as numerous as their enemies, moved out of the town during the night, and set to work on entrenchments which progressed so rapidly that on the 12th Stuart decided to attack without further delay. The attack was delivered on the morrow, in a manner extremely creditable to Stuart and his men, thirteen guns being captured, the key of the position taken, and the enemy compelled to retire within the walls of the fortress. Then on a sudden the position of the victors was turned to one of the direst peril by the indefatigable energy of the great French Admiral. 1783.

After the battle of April 12 both fleets had been condemned to inactivity by scarcity of stores and consequent difficulty in making good the damage to the ships, the repairs to the *Monmouth* alone occupying six weeks. Suffren, thanks to his own infectious energy, was the first to get to sea again, but on July 5 the British fleet appeared at Cuddalore. That evening both fleets stood out to sea, and at 11 A.M. the following morning Hughes, having the weather gauge, bore down to attack. One of Suffren's vessels having lost her top-masts in a squall the night before, the numbers were now equal, eleven ships a side; and the battle was stubbornly contested, but once more with no definite results. Stripping his frigates to repair his war-ships, and his prizes to repair the frigates, the indefatigable Suffren made good his damages far more quickly than Hughes, sailed to Ceylon, where he picked up two ships-of-the-line that had come out from Europe to reinforce him, and on August 25 appeared before Trincomalee. When the dilatory English Admiral arrived on September 2, he found that this all-important post had surrendered to the

1783. enemy. All he could do was to entice the French fleet
Aug. 31. into the open, and there profit by the inferior manner
Sept. 3. in which the French ships were handled so far as to dismast two of them and seriously damage another.

The anchorages on the Coromandel coast now being rendered unsafe by the approach of the monsoon season, the French were able to retire to their new base at Trincomalee, but Hughes was compelled by the loss of that port to sail off to Bombay, thereby leaving the enemy with a pronounced advantage in position, and missing a squadron under Bickerton, which reached Madras four days after the departure of the main fleet, and was likewise compelled to leave the coast. With no interference to be apprehended from the enemy,
March. Suffren was able to meet Bussy and convoy him to Porto Novo; and Tippoo's continued adhesion to the cause after the death of Hyder was secured by the imposing presence of Suffren's fleet. After landing Bussy, Suffren again withdrew to Trincomalee, where he learnt in June of the British attack on Cuddalore.
June 13. Without losing a moment he got under way, reached Cuddalore on the very day of Bussy's defeat above recorded, and on the evening of June 17 embarked 1,200 of the garrison artillery-men to make good the deficiencies in his fleet. On the 20th he attacked the British fleet of eighteen ships with his own fifteen, and although sustaining equal loss, compelled Hughes to retire to Madras. The tables were thus completely turned on the British army, which could no longer obtain supplies by sea, and whose lines of communication by land were incessantly threatened by numerous
June 29. and active bodies of Mysorean horse. A great disaster to the British seemed inevitable when they were delivered by receipt of news that peace had been signed.

Tippoo, now exposed without allies to the enmity of the British, and much depressed by the success of diversions carried out by them with the utmost skill and gallantry on the Malabar coast and in Tanjore, con-

sented in March, 1784, to a peace which provided for mutual restitution of conquests. Five years later, however, he attacked the Rajah of Travancore, a potentate under British protection; and in the following year, after abortive negotiations, Lord Cornwallis, who had succeeded Warren Hastings as Governor-General in 1786, and who combined with that office the post of Commander-in-Chief, was constrained once again to take the field. He was joined by Nizam Ali and the Mahrattas, who were already at war with Tippoo, and he himself was in command of the largest British force which had ever served in India. The difficulties with which he had to contend in an invasion of Mysore were very great, and earlier in his career would probably have involved him in disaster; but the former opponent of Nathanael Greene had profited by the lessons learnt at so bitter a cost in the Carolinas and at Yorktown. Advancing with the utmost caution, he stormed the town of Bangalore, captured almost without loss four or five mountain fortresses in Mysore which had been deemed impregnable, and finally defeated the Sultan in the streets of his capital, Seringapatam. Tippoo was thus driven to an ignominious peace, surrendering to Nizam Ali and the Mahrattas much of the territory taken by his father, and ceding to the British Malabar and Coorg on the one side of the peninsula and Dindigul and Baramahal on the other.

1790. March 1791. Feb. 7, 1792. March 19, 1792.

Much had no doubt been done for the British by the skill and patience of Sir Eyre Coote, by the bull-dog tenacity of Sir Edward Hughes, and by the cautious rashness of Lord Cornwallis; but the real heroes of this phase of the Indian contest had been Suffren on the one side and Warren Hastings on the other. Suffren had brought his operations to a stage at which they must have decisively affected the course of the war, had he not been frustrated on the eve of triumph by the inopportune cessation of hostilities; and this he had done in the face of overwhelming difficulties. At

the time when he reached the Indian coast, his ally, Hyder Ali, had fallen back discomfited; not only had the French been deprived of all their own possessions, but the friendly Dutch ports had also passed into British hands; and he had found no base where ships damaged in action could be repaired or whence supplies could be obtained; yet, with only two frigates to employ on the service, he had kept his fleet afloat for a year in hostile waters by supplying himself with food and stores at the enemy's expense, and with ignorant colleagues, incompetent subordinates, and a neglectful home Government, he had brought the British, never the inferiors of his men in training and discipline and latterly superior to him in the number of their ships, to the brink of ruin. "There was not in him any narrowness of professional prejudice; he always kept in view the necessity, both political and strategic, of nursing the alliance with the Sultan and establishing control upon the seaboard and in the interior; but he clearly recognised that the first step thereto was the control of the sea, by disabling the English fleet. The tenacity and vigour with which he followed this aim, amid great obstacles, joined to the clear-sightedness with which he saw it, are the distinguishing merits of Suffren amid the crowd of French fleet-commanders—his equals in courage, but trammelled by the bonds of a false tradition and the perception of a false objective."[1] Had fortune sent such a colleague as Suffren to the assistance of Dupleix, the long and splendid annals of the East India Company would have shrunk into a small and inglorious page.

The career of Warren Hastings is deficient in the dramatic interest which attaches to exploits performed at the head of armies or of fleets; but the services which he rendered to the Empire were distinguished and valuable in the extreme. How the first and greatest of the Governor-Generals of India was recalled

[1] Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power," p. 444.

and impeached, and how he at last secured an acquittal only at the cost of the private fortune which formed the material reward of his long public service, is a tale too often told to be repeated here. It is a melancholy fact that both before and since his time such men as he have too often received no better reward; but he at least was so far fortunate as to behold with his own eyes how the hour comes when the clouds of factious calumny disperse before the midday splendour of the esteem and gratitude of a nation. In 1813, when close upon thirty years had elapsed since his recall, he was summoned to the bar of the House of Commons, to give evidence on a question of Indian policy; and in a crowded House all the members by one simultaneous impulse rose with their heads uncovered, and stood in silence till he passed the door of their chamber. Slowly but surely the perception was gaining ground that in him to whom this honour was paid was to be found a man who in an hour of deadly peril had contrived by his fertility in resource, his political sagacity, and his fearlessness of responsibility to save the British Empire. He had perceived that power must be openly assumed by those to whom it in fact belonged; he had reformed the revenue system and the administration of justice; he had provided funds when they were urgently needed; and by supporting the Nabob of Oude against his turbulent Mahratta and Rohilla neighbours he had secured the peace for Northern India which had contributed more than any other cause to ultimate triumph in the South. "Bombay had been preserved, and Madras saved, as he himself declared, from annihilation; the Carnatic had been rescued from Hyder Ali; the Mahrattas pacified; and the Nizam conciliated. He had run through very narrow and perilous straits; he had faced heavy and damaging responsibilities, had committed errors and suffered reverses; and had barely rounded without shipwreck one or two very awkward points. Nevertheless he had eventually

broken through the ring of obstacles and dangerous rivalries by which the British Government in India had been encircled, and had so planted our landmarks as to mark out the groundwork of the British dominion. It was the deliberate opinion of Sir John Macpherson (no friend to Hastings), when he looked back on the general situation of the English in India in the year 1781, that while the separation of the American colonies was a blow and a discomfiture from which the English nation would speedily recover, the loss of our Indian possessions would have been such a tremendous commercial and financial calamity, and would have transferred such immense advantages to the side of the French, who would have taken our place and succeeded to all that we gave up, that Great Britain might have been forced to succumb in the contest she was waging against her European enemies, and might have fallen out of the first rank of nations."[1]

[1] Sir Alfred Lyall, "Warren Hastings" (English Men of Action), p. 144.

CHAPTER IX

NELSON AND NAPOLEON

Revolutionary France—Renewed hostilities—Napoleon's Imperial aspirations—Nelson: his early career—Napoleon's Egyptian expedition—Nelson sent into the Mediterranean—Misfortunes to his squadron—His pursuit of the French—The French at Aboukir Bay—Battle of the Nile—Importance of the victory—French successes on the Continent—Revival of the Armed Neutrality—A British fleet sent to the Baltic—Nelson's plan of attack at Copenhagen—Battle of Copenhagen—Peace of Amiens—Napoleon's Imperial schemes—His expedition to Australia—Renewal of war threatened—Napoleon's plans for an invasion of England—Nelson blockades the Toulon fleet—The French escape—Nelson pursues to the West Indies—His return—Villeneuve and Nelson at Cadiz—Trafalgar—Results of the war.

In so far as France and Spain had intervened in the American War from motives of revenge, the Peace of Versailles, which established the independence of America, marked the measure of their triumph; but they were exhausted by the exertions they had made, and in procuring the success of their rebel allies, they had prepared for themselves, in the one case the rapid dissolution of a Colonial Empire which had for long been tottering to a fall, in the other the bloody scourge of domestic revolution. Revolutionary France, the outcome of the chaos, proved to be a fire-brand which was to set Europe in a blaze; and within ten years of the Peace of Versailles England was again at war with her old enemy. But she was not, at least at the outset, fighting for the same objects. In a war with such an enemy she must naturally employ her fleets and must aim some of her blows against Colonial possessions; but she contends, not for the maintenance or

extension of her Empire, but for the subjugation of propagandists aiming at the subversion of monarchy and order. After the rise of Napoleon towards the close of the war, this ceases to be true; Napoleon again imposes on France an Imperial policy.

With this war, then, we are concerned only in so far as its nature was modified by the genius of Napoleon, whose Imperial ambitions began to take shape after the
1797. Peace of Campo Formio.[1] The stage had then been cleared, and the true nature of Napoleon's objects began to grow discernible, as the confusion of a wide-spread conflict passed away. During the preceding years nearly the whole of Europe had been embroiled with Revolutionary France. In 1792 Austria and Prussia had concentrated their armies on the French frontiers, to check the swelling torrent of anarchical violence, and in April of that year the French Assembly had retorted by declaring war. Great alarm had been created in England by the proclamation of the French Republic, the September massacres, the judicial murder of Louis XVI., and the avowed intention of the French Government to convert Antwerp into a naval arsenal. The French, for their part, in the enthusiasm of their new-born passions, were anxious to "lodge 50,000 caps of liberty in England," believing that every nation must desire a commodity which had grown so popular with themselves; and in February, 1793, by way of facilitating this dumping process, they declared war against England. Spain, Holland, and Sardinia were drawn into the conflict in the course of the next few months.

In the earlier stages of the war the French, though distracted by Royalist revolts and the bloody excesses
1795. of the Reign of Terror, contrived to hold their own against a huge but ill-cemented confederacy of foes; and as soon as the settled Government of the Directory

[1] Strictly speaking, of course, it is an anachronism to refer to the future Emperor as "Napoleon" at this period.

was set up in France, the Continental allies of England tired rapidly of a war which had proved costly and unprofitable. An English army sent to aid the Austrians had been expelled from the Netherlands in 1793, and in the following year the French had invaded Holland and compelled her to join her conquerors. Spain and Prussia acknowledged the Republic in 1795, and a year later the former Power, true to her old traditions, was induced to throw in her lot with France and go to war with England. Thus it came about that when Napoleon had imposed peace on Austria by the Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797, England was once again called upon to confront alone the united power of France, Holland, and Spain. Despite her enormous expenditure on armies and fleets, despite the threatened bankruptcy of the Bank of England, and a mutiny of her ill-used sailors at Spithead and the Nore, she faced the crisis with all her old spirit and with not a little of her old success: six great fleets patrolled the seas and blockaded the enemies' harbours, preventing the junction of fleets, which, if united, would have been able to crush her own; and in the great naval battles of the First of June, St. Vincent, and Camperdown the fleet of France was beaten, the fleet of Spain crippled, and the fleet of Holland destroyed. Such was her situation when the most terrible of all her enemies thrust his way into the fore-front of the fray.

1794. Feb. 14, Oct. 11, 1797.

If Napoleon had ever been inspired by the political altruism of the early revolutionists, he had long since discarded their chimerical projects in favour of a frankly personal and national ambition. By the time of Campo Formio he had come to the conclusion that France ought no longer to shed her best blood for a moral cause; and wearying of "this little Europe," which offered too circumscribed a stage for his colossal ambition, his gaze wandered beyond its borders to dwell on visions of a trans-oceanic Empire. "In this great Babylon," he wrote from Paris, "everything wears out;

my glory has already disappeared. This little Europe does not supply enough of it for me. I must seek it in the East: all great fame comes from that quarter. However, I wish first to make a tour along the [northern] coast to see for myself what may be attempted. If the success of a descent upon England appear doubtful, as I suspect it will, the Army of England shall become the Army of the East, and I go to Egypt."[1] After a hurried visit to the Flemish coast in February, 1798, he made a report to the Directory in which he reviewed the situation and set out the conclusions which he had formed. "Whatever efforts we make, we shall not for some years gain the naval supremacy. To invade England without that supremacy is the most daring and difficult task ever undertaken. . . . If, having regard to the present organisation of our navy, it seems impossible to gain the necessary promptness of execution, then we must really give up the expedition against England, be satisfied with keeping up the pretence of it, and concentrate all our attention and resources on the Rhine, in order to try to deprive England of Hanover and Hamburg: . . . or else undertake an eastern expedition which would menace her trade with the Indies. And if none of these operations is practicable, I see nothing else for it but to conclude peace with England."[2] Already in this remarkable passage we may discern in embryo the three great schemes for undoing the British Empire upon which the best energies of the writer's life were to be expended. The shape which those projects assumed in their maturity was this; the invasion of England, the ruin of her European trade, the overthrow of her Indian Empire. To each in turn was Napoleon now to devote himself, to be met at every step by the greatest of the sons of England, and by him in each one to be foiled.

On the 29th day of September in the year 1758, in the rectory-house of the little village of Burnham

[1] Rose, "Life of Napoleon," vol. i. p. 175. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 176.

Thorpe in Norfolk, Nelson made his appearance in the world. The worthy rector, the Rev. Edmund Nelson, had already had four sons and a daughter born to him, and no glimpse into the future revealed the destiny of this his fifth son, to whom, as a descendant of the Walpoles, he gave the baptismal name of Horatio. Since the Nelsons were far from rich, they felt keenly the difficulty of making suitable provision for their children; and in 1770, when Horatio was twelve years old, they asked Mrs. Nelson's brother, Captain Maurice Suckling, of the Royal Navy, to take the boy as a midshipman in a ship which he had then been appointed to command. Suckling thought that "poor little Horatio" was rather young to be sent to rough it at sea, but he was able to find comfort in the reflection that "if a cannon-ball takes off his head, he will at least be provided for." Thanks in the first instance to his uncle's interest, and afterwards to his own promise of ability and charm of manner, the young officer made rapid progress in the profession thus chosen for him: and after a career which had helped to develop his inherent fearlessness of responsibility, and had taught him to be "confident in himself among rocks and sands," the outbreak of the Revolutionary War found him a Captain with an excellent service record to his credit, and within measurable distance of flag rank. In the intervening years of warfare he had served with distinction on the coasts of Corsica and Italy; under Sir John Jervis at Cape St. Vincent had shown still more clearly of what stuff he was made by initiating on his own responsibility, and without orders or suggestions from the Commander-in-Chief, the movement which led to that glorious victory; had lost an eye at the siege of Calvi, and an arm at Teneriffe; but had won what was far more valuable to one who grudged no loss in his country's service, namely, his Admiral's flag, the ribbon of the Bath, and the implicit confidence of the Government.

1798. Early in the year 1798 the British Government became aware, to its extreme disquiet, that the French were engaged in fitting out warships and transports at Toulon and in the adjoining harbours; and nobody could divine the object of the preparations. The secret of the French was well kept, and was not one which their enemies would readily guess. Overcoming both the reluctance of the Directory and the financial difficulties which his project involved, Napoleon on April 12 obtained a secret decree, authorising the seizure of Malta, the invasion of Egypt, and the expulsion of the British from "all their possessions in the East to which the General can come." After some
May 19. delay, caused by adverse winds, he sailed from Toulon at the head of a great armada conveying an army of 35,000 men, and, after seizing Malta on his way, landed at Alexandria, and attacked and captured the city. Pushing across the desert towards Cairo, he then encountered the Mameluke masters of the land within sight of the Pyramids and of their capital, and utterly
July 21. defeated them in a bloody battle. This done he sent inflammatory messages to Tippoo in India, urging him to seek deliverance from the British yoke, and assuring him of the might of France and of her determination to come to his aid. The Sultan of Mysore, as we have seen, was already a sufficiently turbulent neighbour without any such solicitations; and the seriousness of Napoleon's threat may be gauged by the alarm excited in the eminently practical mind of Nelson by a mere conjecture of his that the enemy might be "going on their scheme of possessing Alexandria, and getting troops to India—a plan concerted with Tippoo Saib, by no means so difficult as might at first view be imagined." "If they have concerted a plan with Tippoo Saib, to have vessels at Suez, three weeks, at this season, is a common passage to the Malabar coast, where our Indian possessions would be in great danger."

Meanwhile the man who had thus realised the gravity

of the situation had been undergoing many weary weeks of strain and suspense. At the end of April the Government had written to Jervis, informing him of the anxiety they felt with regard to the naval preparations of the French, and authorising him either to abandon the blockade of Cadiz and observe the Toulon fleet himself, or to detach a squadron of ships-of-the-line for service in the Mediterranean: should he adopt the latter alternative, they suggested "the propriety of putting it under the command of Sir H. Nelson, whose acquaintance with that part of the world, as well as his activity and disposition, seem to qualify him in a peculiar manner for that service." As a matter of fact St. Vincent, who esteemed his subordinate still more highly than did the Admiralty, because he knew him better than they, had already detached him with three ships to watch the Toulon fleet. With these Nelson had left Gibraltar on May 8, and on the 20th, the day after Napoleon put to sea, had encountered a heavy gale, during which his frigates parted company, and his own ship, the *Vanguard*, lost her fore-mast and her main and mizzen top-masts. Towing the *Vanguard* into a neighbouring Sardinian port, Nelson set to work on repairs with his usual energy, and in four days was able to get to sea again; but the officer in command of the frigates, seeing Nelson's plight and not yet knowing his man, had rashly assumed that the *Vanguard* would put back to refit, and instead of awaiting Nelson at the appointed rendezvous, had taken the frigates back to Gibraltar. The loss of these frigates was acutely felt by Nelson during the ensuing weeks; had he had them with him, he must inevitably have intercepted the French armada at sea, when Napoleon and the army were on board. Good may arise out of evil, however, and did so in the present case, for Nelson, delayed by his search for the missing frigates, was joined on June 5 by Hardy in the *Mutine*, who brought news that the French were out, and that St. Vincent was sending him

1798.

1798. a squadron under Troubridge with which to pursue and destroy them.

Nelson at this time knew nothing except that the armada was at sea; as to its object or destination he had no information of any kind, though he could venture a surmise of his own. Hearing on June 14 that the French had been sighted off the Sicilian coast he steered southwards in pursuit, and a week later fell in with a Genoese vessel which reported that the French had captured Malta, and had then continued their voyage: beyond that the Genoese could not, or would not, help. What was he to do? That was the question; and he knew well that an erroneous decision might spell irretrievable ruin. The Government had impressed upon him the supreme importance of his operations, but they had given him neither information, nor instructions, nor even advice, beyond a pious hope that he would keep to windward of the enemy—not especially helpful when that enemy was a week's sail ahead, steering on an unknown course. They had indeed suggested that Sicily, Corfu, Portugal, or even Ireland, might be the enemy's objective; but that was guesswork, and the Admiral himself had formed a conjecture, more shrewd as it happened, of his own. By his own unaided intelligence, without hint or help from the authorities, he had divined the probability of a design on Egypt; and towards Egypt he meant to direct his search, despite risk and uncertainty, despite the winds which would baffle his return, and the appalling consequences of error both to his country and to himself. He knew that to find and beat the French fleet was what the interests of England demanded; and although an inglorious inactivity might secure him from blame, he was not accustomed to consider his own reputation when the welfare of England was at stake. "Was I to wait patiently till I heard certain accounts?" he asked. "If Egypt was their object, before I could hear of them they would have been in India."

The momentous decision made, the Admiral's orders were quickly issued, and the fleet crowded sail for Alexandria. As a matter of fact the French had not left Malta as soon as the Genoese had supposed, and for some days the two fleets sailed side by side, hidden from each other by a veil of mist. Had Nelson's frigates been with him, the French could scarcely have escaped detection: as it was, Napoleon, apprehending pursuit, astutely followed an indirect route to his goal, with the result that the British reached Alexandria three days ahead, to find to their dismay that no French were there, and that nothing of their coming was known. Distracted by the lack of frigates, tortured by anxiety and suspense, and not daring to wait at Alexandria, on the strength of the conjecture which had brought him there, for an enemy who ought long ago to have arrived, the Admiral beat wearily back to Syracuse, persuaded by his despair that more people die of broken hearts than we are aware of. On his arrival in Sicily he received intelligence that the enemy were to the eastwards after all; steering thither once again, he learnt certain tidings of them on July 28; and four days later, at 2.45 in the afternoon, the long pursuit ended in the discovery of the French fleet anchored in Aboukir Bay.

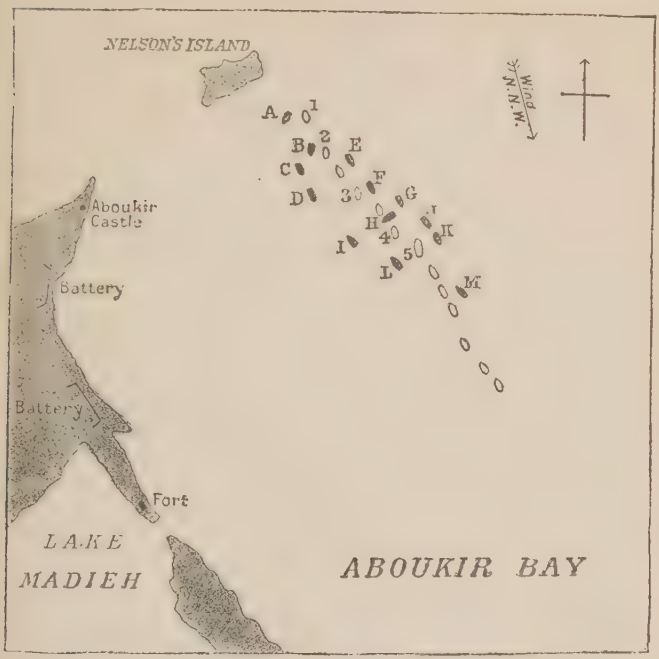
1798. June 28. July 19.

The French commander, Admiral Brueys, had anchored his fleet near the south-western corner of the Bay in a bent line which, at the time of the arrival of the British, was approximately the line of the wind. His force consisted of thirteen ships-of-the-line and four frigates, his flag-ship, the *Orient*, being of 120 guns, three of her consorts of 80 guns, and nine more of 74 guns, whilst of the frigates two were of 40 guns and two of 36. In Nelson's fleet there were thirteen vessels in all, twelve ships-of-the-line of 74 guns, and one smaller vessel, the *Leander;* and of these, one seventy-four, the *Culloden*, struck on a rock and took no part in the approaching battle. The superiority of the

1798. French was less formidable than appears on paper, for many of their ships were old and a few scarcely seaworthy, and of their men only a few were seamen, and all were inexperienced and undisciplined. But the position which they had taken up threw a grave responsibility on the British Admiral. Brueys had anchored as near the in-shore shallows as he could venture to go; the waters of the Bay were treacherous with sandbanks and rocks; not an officer in the British fleet knew the ground; and, except for a recently captured sketch-map, not a chart of any kind was to be had. Add to this that at the moment of discovering the enemy the British ships were scattered, and that all were still so far away that it was doubtful whether even the nearest would be able to take up their positions by daylight: and that of the many brave and skilful commanders of the last hundred years, not one, neither the courageous d'Estaing, nor the cool-headed Hood, nor even the illustrious Suffren himself, had ever ventured to attack a fleet at anchor under cover of shore batteries. Like Drake at Cadiz, however, Nelson had come upon the scene, not to calculate risks, but to destroy the enemy; and flying the simple signals which served to explain his intentions to captains already familiar with his ideas, he ordered his squadron to stand in and attack.

The intention of the Admiral, as known to his captains, was to concentrate on the French van and centre, anchoring his ships by the stern in positions most advantageous for damaging the enemy—whether inside or outside of their line was left to the captains to decide. At half-past five, as he neared the Bay, he flew the signal to form line of battle. Captain Foley in the *Goliath*, which led the fleet, surmising that the French would expect no attack from the in-shore side, passed under the bows of the first French ship, the *Guerrier*, sounding as he went, and anchored, with four of his consorts, between the French line and the shore. The

action opened at half-past six, and at twenty minutes to seven the masts of the *Guerrier*, raked by each British ship in turn, fell over her side. The five remaining 1798.



BATTLE OF THE NILE.

A. *Zealous.*	F. *Minotaur.*	K. *Bellerophon.*	2. *Conquérant.*
B. *Audacious.*	G. *Defence.*	L. *Alexander.*	3. *Aquilon.*
C. *Goliath.*	H. *Leander.*	M. *Majestic.*	4. *Franklin.*
D. *Theseus.*	I. *Orion.*	——	5. *Orient.*
E. *Vanguard.*	J. *Swiftsure.*	1. *Guerrier.*	

British ships—the *Culloden* had gone ashore, and two, which had been scouting to leeward when the French were sighted, had not yet come into action—followed

1798. their flag-ship, the *Vanguard*, to positions on the outer side of Brueys' line, and before seven o'clock the engagement had become general. Then was seen the perfection of Nelson's plan for concentrating his whole force on a portion of the enemy's fleet. Four French vessels were indeed contending with four opponents, but one of them was the *Guerrier*, already riddled with shot and no match for her antagonist, the *Zealous;* of the rest of their fleet the *Conquérant* was in the worst plight, being exposed to the broadsides of the *Audacious*, *Goliath*, and *Theseus*, the latter of which spared half her guns to batter the *Aquilon*, already engaged by the *Minotaur;* and two more French vessels were enduring the merciless cross-fire of the *Orion* and *Defence:* five of Brueys' line-of-battle ships and all his frigates rode helplessly at anchor, witnessing the destruction of their consorts, and waiting till their own turn should come.

To a battle fought on such terms there could be but one result. Shortly after eight o'clock the *Swiftsure* and *Alexander*, which had been to leeward in the afternoon, came into action, followed at a short interval by the little *Leander;* and all of them at once concentrated upon the *Orient* and *Franklin* in the French centre, which had already been subjected to the destructive fire of three other British ships. A little before nine o'clock flames were observed on the poop of Brueys' flag-ship, the *Orient*, and as the British redoubled their efforts so as to prevent any attempts to check the blaze, she was soon burning furiously, and before ten o'clock blew up.[1] With this catastrophe the battle ended, and Nelson waited impatiently for the coming of daylight to reveal the extent of his triumph. Even to him it must have appeared complete, although

[1] The reader may be reminded that the French chief of the staff on board the *Orient* was Casabianca, "who, with his young son, perished in the explosion, not exactly in the way described in Mrs. Hemans's popular little poem." Sir J. K. Laughton, "Nelson" (Eng. Men of Action), p. 119.

he hinted that, but for a wound which had prostrated him early in the battle, it would perhaps have been completer still. Of the French vessels two ships-of-the-line and two frigates only, out of a total of seventeen, escaped; two battle-ships and a frigate were destroyed by fire; one frigate was wrecked; and nine ships-of-the-line were captured by the victors. 1798.

The victory was indeed of a completeness unexampled in naval warfare, and its results, as Nelson, and not Nelson alone, perceived, were proportionately great. When the news reached London, the East India Company at once acknowledged its own special obligations by adding a present of £10,000 to the Admiral to the numerous tokens of gratitude showered on him from all parts of Europe. As Nelson himself wrote a few days after the battle, in a letter which he sent overland from Alexandretta to the Governor of Bombay, except in the highly improbable event of a large fleet being collected by the enemy in the Red Sea, the British in India were relieved from all anxiety on the score of Napoleon's Army of the East; for that Army was now cut off from France, could scarcely hope for success in any Syrian expedition, being deprived of water transport, and was menaced in its hold on Egypt itself by the enmity of the people and by the British control at sea. He was right—his victory in Aboukir Bay had sounded the knell of Napoleon's hopes; and after a disastrous campaign in Syria the French General abandoned his army and slunk back to Paris, cured for the present of any ambition to deprive Great Britain of her Indian Empire. But to a man of his boundless enterprise, unlimited self-confidence, and insatiable thirst for success, failure in one quarter by no means implied defeat in all: he had other irons in the fire, and another project was soon to claim his attention.

During his absence in the East a renewal of the coalition against France had been brought about by

English diplomacy and gold, and Austria and Russia had joined Great Britain. The success of the Allies had at first been complete. While a British force under the Duke of York re-entered the Netherlands, the armies of Austria and Russia, separately or in union, had expelled the French from Italy, and in Germany had defeated them and driven them back. Much discontent had been aroused in France by these reverses, and Napoleon, on his return from Egypt, had seized the moment to overthrow the incapable Directory and establish himself, under the name of First Consul, as the autocrat of France. In the course of foreign affairs justification for the *coup d'état* was speedily furnished. The crazy potentate who misgoverned Russia under the name of Czar Paul, had gone to war with France because she was republican, and withdrew when she became despotic; the Netherlands were cleared of British; the Austrian army on the Rhine was crushed by Moreau at Hohenlinden; and Napoleon himself, taking his army across the Great St. Bernard Pass, and thereby catching the Austrians in rear in Italy, defeated them at Marengo, cut off and captured the survivors of that battle, and in the following year dictated peace to Austria at Lunéville. Thus, for the second time since 1793, was England left alone to carry on the conflict with France.

It was not enough for Napoleon that the arch-enemy should be isolated: he must himself secure allies, for he was still powerless in face of the sea-power which had frustrated his designs on England and had blasted the fabric of his Egyptian dream. His new project, alike in conception and execution, was worthy of the master hand. Encouraged by the recent behaviour of the Czar Paul, he designed to draw Russia and Prussia into war with England, confident that the lesser Northern Powers would follow in their train, and calculating upon such a combination as would challenge the naval

supremacy of Britain and ruin her Continental trade. With this end in view he astutely cajoled the principals, releasing all Russian prisoners, offering to Paul the island of Malta now on the eve of capture by the British, and dilating, for the benefit of all concerned, upon the iniquitous pretensions of the British at sea. In playing the last card he was sure of the effect, for the causes of irritation that had produced the Armed Neutrality of 1780 had not been absent in the present war: the British had as usual complained that France was allowed to carry on her commerce and import her war stores under neutral flags, whilst the neutrals had, equally as usual, resented and resisted the British right of search. The seed sown by Napoleon, falling on fertile soil in the irritability of Paul and the greed of Prussia, came rapidly to maturity; and by a treaty between Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark, signed on December 16, 1800, the Armed Neutrality was again called into existence.

When this event became known in England, opinion 1801.
there was unanimous upon two points; the pretensions of the Confederates must instantly be disputed, and the hero of the Nile must be employed upon that service. On February 12 Nelson, who was serving under St. Vincent in the Channel, was ordered to transfer his flag to the *St. George* and place himself under the command of Sir Hyde Parker at Yarmouth. Sir Hyde was a respectable officer and was in the confidence of the Government; but he was not a man of the stamp of Nelson, and the relations of the Admirals were strained from the outset. Conscious, perhaps, that his own merits were likely to be thrown into the shade by the skill and dash of his irrepressible subordinate, Parker, when constrained to meet Nelson, treated him with a reserve which had somewhat the appearance of neglect. The fiery second in command, deeply wounded that the supreme control should have been withheld from himself, was angered by this treatment, and was

1801. not in the mood to form a favourable opinion of his chief. Sir Hyde had outlived his enthusiasms, and, so Nelson thought, was devoting his days at Yarmouth to enjoyment of home comforts, to social trivialities, and generally to the neglect of his duties. But even that was not the worst. When Nelson arrived on March 2, thirsting to "strike quick, and home," he found that all plans for the departure of the fleet were at a standstill because Sir Hyde and his wife had organised a great ball for March 13. His disgust may be imagined, and was freely expressed to St. Vincent, now at the
March 11. Admiralty, who at once committed the impoliteness, as Nelson ironically phrased it, of squashing the ball by sending gentlemen to sea instead of dancing with
March 12. white gloves. Next day, therefore, Parker sailed.

The northern point of Denmark was reached on the 19th, and Nelson, knowing that every hour of delay would turn to the advantage of the defence, was urgent for an immediate advance. But the cautious Parker held other views: he was undecided by which passage to sail into the Baltic, whether by the Sound, to the east, or by the Great Belt, to the west, of Zealand; he wanted more information concerning the defences of Copenhagen; and he was anxious to try the effect of diplomatic pressure, forgetting, as his second could have told him, that "a fleet of British battle-ships are the best negotiators in Europe." The envoy whom he sent ahead to Copenhagen returned on the 23rd, with news that Denmark would accept no terms, and with alarmist reports as to the strength of the enemy's preparations. Mollified by the gift of a turbot from Nelson, and feeling, doubtless, that the giver was "a useful sort of man on a pinch," Sir Hyde then called him to his councils. In these councils despondency prevailed, and it required all the tact, courage, and energy of Nelson during that and the following day to dispel the gloom by the cheering influence of his spoken and written words. His own preference was

for a prompt advance against a detachment of the Russian fleet, then at Revel—an intuition unquestionably sound, for Russia was the backbone of the Confederacy, and a true blow at the Czar would bring that monarch's edifice in ruins about his ears; but Nelson had little hope of persuading Parker to sail into the Baltic, leaving Denmark hostile and uncrushed in his rear. Dropping the Russian project, therefore, he insisted urgently upon the need for an immediate advance upon Copenhagen: "Go by the Sound," he said, "or by the Belt, or anyhow, only lose not an hour." The proper method of attack, in his opinion —the method, that is, which would enable Parker "to get at them with least risk to our ships"—was to attack Copenhagen in rear, where the defences would be weakest, and where the British fleet would be interposed between Denmark and her allies. 1801.

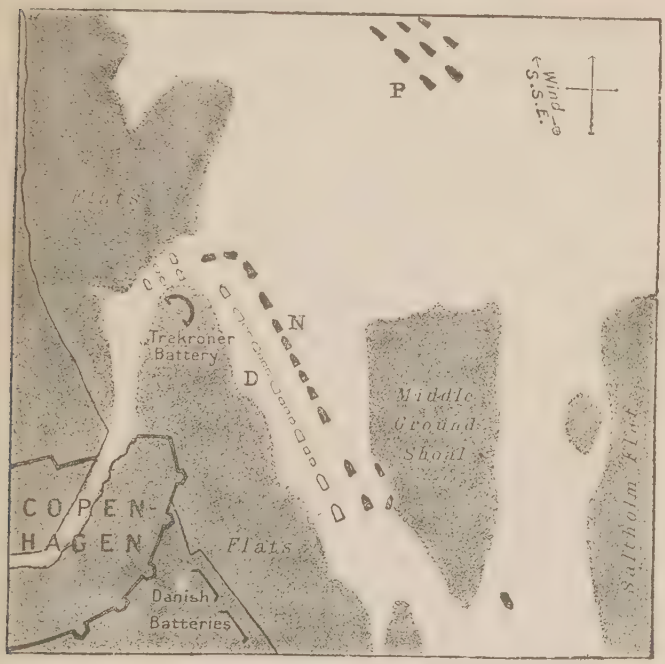
Fortunately both for England and for himself Nelson's advice was taken, and it was decided that an attack with twelve ships should be delivered by Nelson, the rest of the fleet being held in reserve under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. The town of Copenhagen is approached on the side of the sea by two channels of somewhat intricate navigation, running approximately north and south between shoals and flats. To the north of the town was the entrance to the harbour proper, protected by two Danish war-ships, two armed hulks, a frigate, and a permanent work called the Trekroner or Three-Crown Battery; south of this battery the Danes had drawn up a long line of ships and floating batteries in front of the walls; and two other permanent fortifications covered the shore in front of and below the town. Provided the wind would serve, Nelson proposed to enter by the southern channel, in order that ships damaged in action might be able to escape northwards to rejoin Parker and the reserves, the turning of the other channel allowing of no such egress, if the

1801. attack were made on a northerly wind. The ships and batteries of the defence being stationary and the British fleet mobile, the attack in either case was likely to afford a concentration of strength on a portion of the hostile force.

After some delay caused by a gale, head winds, and calms, the fleet got under way again on March 30, passed the batteries on the Swedish shore of the Sound unmolested, and anchored that afternoon below Copenhagen. Forty-eight hours were then spent in buoying the channels and taking stock of the enemy's position and preparations; and on the afternoon of April 1 Nelson and the attacking squadron dropped down on a northerly breeze to an anchorage at the mouth of the southern inlet, below the shoal over against Copenhagen called the Middle Ground. Towards evening the signal to prepare for action was hoisted, and Nelson, who had transferred his flag to a smaller ship, the *Elephant*, went to dinner with his officers, including Admiral Graves, his second in command, and Captains Foley, Hardy, and Fremantle: his spirits, as always when face to face with difficulty and danger, were of the highest, and his comrades left him "with feelings of admiration for their great leader, and with anxious impatience to follow him to the approaching battle." Between nine and ten o'clock he retired to the after-cabin, to prepare his Orders for Battle, completed these
April 2. shortly after midnight, and insisted on supervising the work of the clerks who were set to copy them. On the morrow he was up and had breakfasted by seven o'clock, at which hour he signalled for his captains to come and get their instructions. Fortune was as usual kind to him, and the wind, which had brought him southwards the day before, had veered round during the night, and was fair to take him into battle.

Soon after eight the fleet was ordered to weigh anchor, and moved off before the breeze. Before getting into action it was reduced to nine vessels by

the failure of one ship to weather the Middle Ground shoal, and by the grounding of two others upon it; but the Admiral's plans were quickly modified to meet the emergency, and the battle began. Before any 1801.



BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN.
D. Danes. *N.* Nelson. *P.* Parker.

definite results had been obtained, Parker, who had observed with alarm that Nelson had been deprived of three of his battle-ships and that the Danish resistance was unexpectedly vigorous, hoisted a signal to discontinue the action. The Signal Lieutenant re-

1801. ported it to Nelson, who paced the deck in agitation; but knowing that obedience would spell ruin to his honour, he took the responsibility of ignoring the command. "'You know, Foley,'" he said to his captain, "'I have only one eye—I have a right to be blind sometimes,' and then with an archness peculiar to his character, putting the glass to his blind eye, he exclaimed, 'I really do not see the signal.'"[1] His own signal for close action was left flying, and with the exception of some frigates engaged with the Trekroner Battery, whose captains, being close to Parker, saw and obeyed the Commander-in-Chief's order, not a single British ship strayed. At the end of another hour two Danish ships had been driven from the line, one of them in flames; four had been hopelessly shattered; four more lay in a huddled group between the fire of the British and of their own batteries, and under a flag of truce despatched by Nelson an agreement was come to which brought the battle to an end.

March 31. In conjunction with the opportune assassination of the erratic Paul and the accession of a new Russian Czar, Alexander, more friendly disposed to England,—an event which had already occurred, but was not yet known to Nelson,—the British victory at Copenhagen shattered the coalition of the Northern Powers, and with it the hopes which Napoleon had founded upon their intervention. This supremely important result must be attributed entirely to the skill, courage, and tenacity of the great British sailor who had already foiled the national enemy so gloriously at the Nile. "The man who went into the Copenhagen fight with

[1] "It does not detract from the real merit of Nelson, who never sought to avoid responsibility, to know that the performance was merely a joke, and that the commander-in-chief had sent a private message that the signal should be considered optional—to be obeyed or not at the discretion of Nelson, who might be supposed to have a better knowledge of the circumstances than he could possibly have at a distance."—"Dict. Nat. Biog.," vol. xl. p. 201.

an eye upon withdrawing from action would have been 1801.
beaten before he began. It is upon the clear perception of this truth, and his tenacious grip of it, that the vast merit of Nelson in this incident depends, and not upon the disobedience; though never was disobedience more justified, more imperative, more glorious. To retire, with crippled ships and mangled crews, through difficult channels, under the guns of the half-beaten foe, who would renew his strength when he saw the movement, would be to court destruction,—to convert probable victory into certain, and perhaps overwhelming, disaster. It was not, however, only in superiority of judgment or of fighting quality that Nelson in this one act towered like a giant above his superior; it was in that supreme moral characteristic which enabled him to shut his eyes to the perils and doubts surrounding the only path by which he could achieve success, and save his command from a defeat verging on annihilation. The pantomime of putting the glass to his blind eye was, however unintentionally, a profound allegory. There is a time to be blind as well as a time to see. And if in it there was a little bit of conscious drama, it was one of those touches that not only provoke the plaudits of the spectators, but stir and raise their hearts, giving them both an example of heroic steadfastness, and also the assurance that there is one standing by upon whom their confidence can repose to the bitter end,—no small thing in the hour of hard and doubtful battle."[1]

Negotiations for peace with France, at which some attempt had already been made, were now formally renewed, and issued some months later in the Peace of Amiens between England on the one hand, and France, Spain, and Holland on the other. Under the terms of this treaty France retained her ascendancy in Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Holland: England was permitted by the generosity of Napoleon to take

[1] Mahan, "Life of Nelson," vol. ii. p. 93.

Ceylon from the Dutch and Trinidad from Spain. "The nation," says an historian, "was glad to obtain peace on these respectable if not brilliant terms:" if so, the nation was singularly untrue to itself. It was no new thing in the history of the Empire for the results of successes won by British soldiers and sailors despite the ignorant policy and fatuous organisation of one Administration to be deliberately thrown away in the indecent haste of another Administration to escape from a war not of its own making; but no Government had ever yet been guilty of so flagrant a breach of national trust. British armies had indeed met with reverses on the Continent, thanks chiefly to the selfishness and stupidity of the Allies thrust upon them; and much blood and money had been uselessly squandered in an attempt to conquer the French, Spanish, half-caste, and negro inhabitants of St. Domingo, the nut which Napoleon himself was soon to find too hard to crack. But such failures as these were enormously outweighed by the innumerable successes which had graced the British flag during the war. In addition to the great naval victories of the First of June, St. Vincent, Camperdown, the Nile, and Copenhagen, and lesser naval successes, which had resulted in the capture of fifty ships-of-the-line from France alone, Great Britain had put down the insurrections organised by her enemies in Grenada and St. Vincent, and had taken from those enemies Minorca, Malta, Elba, Pondicherry, Mahé, Carical, Chandernagore, Surat, the Cape of Good Hope, Tobago, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Martinique, Sta. Lucia, Cochin China, Ceylon, Malacca, Amboyna, Banda, Trinidad, Surinam, Curaçoa, St. Bartholomew, St. Martin, St. John, St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. Eustatius, and Saba, besides foiling Napoleon in every attempt which he had directed against the Empire, and defeating and capturing with an inferior force the army which he had abandoned in Egypt. To accomplish this she had added close upon three hundred

millions to her National Debt, and in return for it all she was to receive the paltry reward of a couple of islands which did not even belong to France. Certainly such terms were not brilliant: it may even be thought that the stigma of "respectability" scarcely damns them with sufficiently faint praise. Fortunately there was one quarter, namely, India, where Cabinets and War Ministers ceased in a measure from troubling, and there British rule had been strengthened by the overthrow of Tippoo Sahib, the annexation of Mysore, the Carnatic, Surat, and Tanjore, and the final subjection of the South. Unfortunately, there was another quarter, namely, Europe, where England, for all her concessions, had not even obtained peace, but only a truce until such time as it should suit the convenience of her enemy to renew the conflict.

What Napoleon chiefly valued in this Peace was the prospect which it afforded of effecting the restoration of the trans-oceanic Empire of France, as was shown by the plans which he proceeded to put on foot. His first object was the overthrow of the Black Republic which an active and intelligent negro, Toussaint L'Ouverture, had established in St. Domingo, and a huge armament was despatched against the island; but the French, like their British predecessors, were subdued by that terrible foe of the white man in the West Indies, the yellow fever, and the enterprise produced no result save the loss of twenty French Generals and 30,000 French troops. Foiled in war by the blacks, he then attempted by diplomacy to extort Louisiana from Spain, but only to be met by the unbending opposition of the United States, to whom he was ultimately compelled to sell that vast American territory. His roving gaze had also been arrested by the island continent which Captain Cook had discovered in the Southern Seas; he had studied Cook's voyages on his way to Egypt; and one of his earliest acts as First Consul had been the despatch of an expedition to Australia. The

1802-1803. sea was not at that time a particularly safe place for ships flying the French flag, but screening themselves behind a profession of scientific discovery, in whose name none appealed to the British Admiralty in vain, they were allowed to go on their way in peace. As the instructions with which this expedition was furnished by Napoleon have perished, its true objects will never be known; but it may be assumed without undue rashness that a consuming passion for geographical and scientific knowledge was not the only motive that contributed to its despatch. The British in Australia at the period consisted only of those whom a rigorous criminal code had transported to certain penal settlements in and around Sydney; and the huge expanse of the rest of the continent, unoccupied and unexplored, may well have appeared to Napoleon to offer a promising field for his political ambition. Governor King of Sydney, at all events, thought so ill of the good faith of the explorers that, when they took leave of him, he sent a ship to watch them, with orders to hoist the British flag wherever the French went ashore; and his suspicions were justified by the subsequent publication of a map in which the greater part of the continent figured as a French possession, bespattered with French names.

Ministers might affect indifference to these enterprises, but even they could not shut their eyes to the significance of other manifestations of Napoleon's energy. In the beginning of March, 1803, an armed force sailed from Brest under General Decaen, and after inspecting the Cape, which we had just restored to Holland, proceeded to the Indian seas and landed in July at Pondicherry, to revive the menace of French intervention in India. French interference in Switzerland, French restrictions on English commerce, and French annexation of Piedmont, Parma, and Elba, were also sufficiently alarming; but even those aggressions paled before the outrage of Napoleon's persistent grip upon Holland,

whereby Cape Town, the port of call on the Indian voyage, was closed to British ships. Last, but far from least, came the question of Malta; and upon Malta, as being the only barrier against Napoleon's designs upon Egypt and India, the British Government very properly determined to maintain its hold. As Napoleon had publicly pledged himself to oust England from the Mediterranean, the question admitted of no peaceable solution; and the Cabinet, stiffened by the arrogance of his bearing, were in no conciliatory mood. In April an adroit but perfidious suggestion for sub- 1803.
mitting the Maltese question to the arbitration of the Czar was rejected; in the beginning of May the British Ambassador was recalled from Paris; and on the 16th of that month war was formally declared.

The military situation which confronted the belligerents in no way differed from that which had obtained at the close of the last war, when England, supreme on the sea, and Napoleon, supreme on land, had arrived at a position of stalemate. Napoleon, however, had remodelled his plans in the light of the experience which he had gained. He had learnt to appreciate more nearly at its true worth the importance of that sea power which had brought his Oriental schemes to naught, and had foiled his design of closing to England those sources of commercial wealth that made her so formidable and so untiring an enemy; and he had reverted to the project which he had formed five years before, only then to discard it as impracticable. Events had hastened him into war before he had had time to effect his intended restoration of the naval forces of France, but those forces were still considerable, and it lay in his power to add to them the navies of Holland, of North Italy, and of Spain. Such a combination would put him on an equality, at all events on paper, with the navy of Great Britain, and he proposed to ruin her Empire for good and all by striking a mortal blow at its heart. In detail his plan

1803. underwent changes from time to time, but in substance it remained the same down to the moment when the hour for putting it into execution arrived: the fleet at Toulon was to pick up a Spanish reinforcement at Cadiz, and was then to proceed to the West Indies, where it was to be joined by the Brest fleet, which should have destroyed the British blockading squadron, and united with further detachments of French and Spanish ships at Ferrol; the British were to be distracted by feints on Egypt, the Morea, and Ireland; the English West Indies were to be damaged so far as time allowed: and then the united armada was to make sail for the English Channel, where Napoleon and 150,000 soldiers would be waiting at Boulogne to be convoyed to the English coast. He asked of his fleets, not that they should gain a permanent naval supremacy, but merely that they should win by speed and guile the short-lived superiority of numbers in the Straits of Dover that would ensure a safe crossing for his troops: let him but land in England with the veterans who had brought Europe to his feet, and he would dictate peace to Britain at St. Stephen's or at Whitehall. Difficulties existed for him only that they might be grappled with, and dangers that they might be faced: he would put all to the hazard of a single throw, in the knowledge that a world-wide empire would be the victor's prize.

In this the supreme hour of her peril England looked only to her sailors, and of them she looked most to him who seemed to embody in himself the very essence of her maritime genius. On the day on which war had been declared, Nelson had been summoned to the Admiralty to receive his commission as Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet; and two days later he had hoisted his flag in the 100-gun ship *Victory* which was to be immortally associated with his name. The task appointed him was to watch the Toulon fleet, and for close upon two years he maintained that watch

with zeal, tenacity, and endurance that seemed almost superhuman. His crazy ships were unfit for winter cruising; his crews were short of their complements by a hundred men apiece; his nearest base was three weeks' sail away; and the seas he patrolled were swept by gales of exceptional severity, and encircled by a hostile littoral where food and water could only with difficulty be obtained. But the great sailor was never daunted, the long watch never relaxed, ships were kept seaworthy, and men kept fed and clad and well, so that at the end he could boast that he brought with him from Toulon "eleven as fine ships of war, as ably commanded, and in as perfect order and health as ever went to sea." By the very performance of his task he dulls appreciation of its greatness. Imagination cannot conceive the strain of that long and weary watching, of that ceaseless anxiety, of that unending demand on patience, foresight, and resolve. Not once between June, 1803, and July, 1805, did Nelson set foot on shore, and never had he any certain information as to the intentions of the enemy. "The Admiralty tells me nothing, they know nothing. Ball is sure they are going to Egypt; the Turks are sure they are going to the Morea; Mr. Elliot at Naples, to Sicily; and the King of Sardinia, to his only spot. Every power thinks they are destined against them." But terrible as is the load of anxiety and doubt, it never dims the radiance of the pure light within. "These gentlemen," he says in a moment of hope, "must soon be so perfect in theory, that they will come to sea to put their knowledge into practice. Could I see that day, it would make me happy." "*Nil desperandum!*" he cries in an hour of despondency; "God is good, and our cause is just." And again, in the calmness of the belief by which he is inspired: "Whatever the French may intend to do, I trust, and with confidence, they are destined for *Spithead*." 1803-1805.

At length, on April 4, 1805, the long watch off Toulon came to an end. That day, at 10 A.M., the

1805. British frigate *Phœbe* joined Nelson near Palmas with news that the enemy had put to sea; and a few hours later her consort, the *Active*, reported that Admiral Villeneuve had left Toulon during the night of March 30, and that she had sighted him the following morning, had followed him throughout the day, but had lost sight of him in the night. Thus, through sheer bad luck, the great object of the long blockade was missed, and the enemy had slipped away unperceived, renewing the agony of apprehension in which Nelson had once already been plunged by a previous sortie of the French until he heard that a hurricane had driven them back to port. Now he was again in the throes of the exasperating uncertainty of inference and conjecture. For two days he hung on off Sardinia, hoping for further news; then, in concern for Egypt, he sailed eastwards to Sicily. At Palermo on the 9th he found reason to suppose that the French had been bound to the westward, but he was still far from sure of his ground, and head winds, which for a week delayed his return to Sardinia, added to his frenzy. There, on the 18th, he heard that Villeneuve had been sighted off the coast of Spain ten days before, and on the 19th that he had passed the Straits of Gibraltar. Leaving a squadron of frigates to police the Mediterranean, lest lesser French thieves should venture abroad, and sending the *Amazon* ahead to gather news, Nelson set out for Gibraltar with the design of taking up his station off the Scilly Isles, should no further information reach him. "My good fortune seems flown away. I cannot get a fair wind, or even a side wind. Dead foul!—dead foul! . . . I believe this ill-luck will go near to kill me." It was not till May 4 that the squadron reached Tetuan, east of the Straits, and there, as the wind was still foul, Nelson used the time in getting fresh supplies. The notion was fast gaining on him that the enemy might have gone to the West Indies; but he could not very properly run there on a surmise, though Villeneuve

already had a month's start of him, and if he delayed, Jamaica might be lost. The wind coming fair, he hurried on again on the 5th, but only to fresh disappointments: at Gibraltar, no news; from Sir John Orde off Cadiz, no news; from Lisbon, no news; at Cape St. Vincent, no news, except the added distraction that he must wait to protect a convoy on its way to the Mediterranean. At length certain intelligence reached him that the West Indies were in truth Villeneuve's destination, and on May 10 his final resolve to follow was taken. "It will not be supposed that I am on a party of pleasure, running after eighteen sail of the line with ten, and that to the West Indies;" but "salt beef and the French fleet is far preferable to roast beef and champagne without them." 1805.

Now that Nelson was sure of the destination of the French, his anxiety to come up with them was, if possible, increased, for the West Indian islands were reckoned the fairest jewels in the Imperial diadem of England, and one and all would be at the mercy of so large a force as Villeneuve's. On May 10, the day on which he resolved finally to follow across the Atlantic, a frigate started for Barbados to announce his coming; and the following morning the whole fleet put to sea. The winds were too light and the pace too slow to soothe the Admiral's fevered mind, but they spared him mishaps, and on June 4 he dropped anchor off Barbados, having wiped off ten days of his heavy arrears of time. There he heard from General Brereton at Sta. Lucia that the enemy had been sighted sailing southwards exactly a week before, and that every commanding officer on the station trembled for the fate of Tobago and Trinidad. Nelson, although distrustful of Brereton's accuracy, could not ignore intelligence so precise; accordingly he set sail for Trinidad, to learn on his arrival there that not a sign of a Frenchman had been seen. Forty-eight hours later he learnt the truth from Dominica. Villeneuve had lain inactive for three

1805. weeks at Martinique, waiting for the Brest squadron, which had been given forty days to join him, and not daring to trust his incompetent crews to turn the interval to account; a reinforcement from Europe had come in, raising his strength to twenty sail of the line, together with positive orders from Napoleon to attempt some conquests; in obedience to these orders he had left Martinique on June 4, to strike at Barbados; on the 8th he had heard of Nelson's arrival with fourteen ships; and thereupon he had immediately determined to return to Europe with all possible speed. Nelson, therefore, had saved the West Indies and had prevented the union of the French fleets; but he was haunted by the thought of the opportunity he had lost. "There would have been no occasion for opinions, had not General Brereton sent his damned intelligence from St. Lucia. I should have fought the battle on June 6 where Rodney fought his."

Nelson would have been other than he was if he had not repined over an opportunity for battle lost; but at least he was now spared the sickening dread of disaster that had haunted him so long. There was still a chance that Villeneuve's departure for Europe might after all be a ruse, and by the diversity of opinions expressed around him Nelson could gauge the doubtfulness of his own conclusions; but he could afford to despise a fleet that had wasted three precious weeks in idleness, and had run at the first alarm. Besides, that fleet had but five days' start of him now, and since he had gained ten days on the outward voyage, there was still a prospect of overtaking and defeating it before it reached the Spanish coast. So the British squadron began to retrace its course, with its impatient chief fretting over the lightness of the winds, and cursing in his heart the carelessness or stupidity of the luckless General at Sta. Lucia. Reaching Gibraltar on July 19, and finding that nothing of the French was known there, he hurried on northwards, signalling

Collingwood off the Spanish coast and Cornwallis off Brest, but tarrying for no man in his thirst for news: and on August 18 the *Victory's* anchor dropped at Spithead. There, if he knew it not already, he could measure the greatness of the peril that hung over the country. Calder, forewarned by Nelson, had intercepted Villeneuve off Ferrol, but had failed to crush him,—indeed, had actually allowed him to escape; and across the water, on the cliffs at Boulogne, men had seen Napoleon and his veterans straining anxious eyes seawards for a sight of the armada that Calder had seen and lost. "There has been the greatest alarm ever known in the city of London," wrote one who was there in those days of gloom. "There is such an universal bustle and cry about invasion," said another, "that no other subject will be listened to at present by those in power. I found London almost a desert, and no good news stirring to animate it." Yet even in the hour of peril and panic there were those who could appreciate Nelson's achievement, devoid though it was of martial ornament. "Either the distances between the different quarters of the globe are diminished," wrote Elliot to Nelson, "or you have extended the powers of human action. After an unremitting cruise of two long years in the stormy Gulf of Lyons, to have proceeded without going into port to Alexandria, from Alexandria to the West Indies, from the West Indies back again to Gibraltar; to have kept your ships afloat, your rigging standing, and your crews in health and spirits, is an effort such as never was realised in former times, nor, I doubt, will ever again be repeated by any other admiral. You have protected us for two long years, and you saved the West Indies by only a few days." 1805.

For a brief interval Nelson enjoyed the peace and quietness of his home at Merton, happy in the knowledge of arduous duty well performed, and of splendid service recognised, happiest of all in the society of the

1805. woman whom he so passionately loved. Then, all too soon, there sounded once again in his ears the trumpet call of duty. On September 2 came tidings that the long-sought Villeneuve had been found at Cadiz; on the 3rd Nelson was summoned to resume his command; and on the 14th, as soon as the *Victory* was ready, he embarked, going, as he said, to put much to the hazard with little to gain, but going because it was right, and because he would serve his country faithfully.

Napoleon, when he heard of Villeneuve's retreat after his action with Calder, abandoned for the moment his cherished scheme for the invasion of England, and with that celerity of decision and of movement that constituted no small part of his genius, hastened his armies across the Austrian frontier, to cover his failure by a career of conquest where the fleets of Britain could not bar the way. Furious with Villeneuve, whose insight into the inefficiency of the Allied fleet he mistook for poltroonery, and to whom he attributed the collapse of his combinations, he despatched a curt order to that unhappy commander to betake himself to Italy, no matter where the British fleet might be. Nelson, wholly unprepared for rashness in his enemies, joined the blockading squadron off Cadiz on the evening of September 28, more than half afraid that another spell of monotonous watching might be before him. But there was a chance that the great fleet in Cadiz might be starved into coming out of port, and for this he made ready by the issue of the famous Memorandum of October 9, to familiarise his captains with his plan of action. Two days later Villeneuve heard from Paris that another Admiral was on his way to supersede him, and his honour taking alarm, he wrote in reply that he intended to put to sea at once. A few days afterwards the wind came fair, and on the 19th the Allied fleet, thirty-three sail of the line, issued from the port. The news was signalled to Nelson, who headed his twenty-seven ships for the Straits to intercept the enemy; and

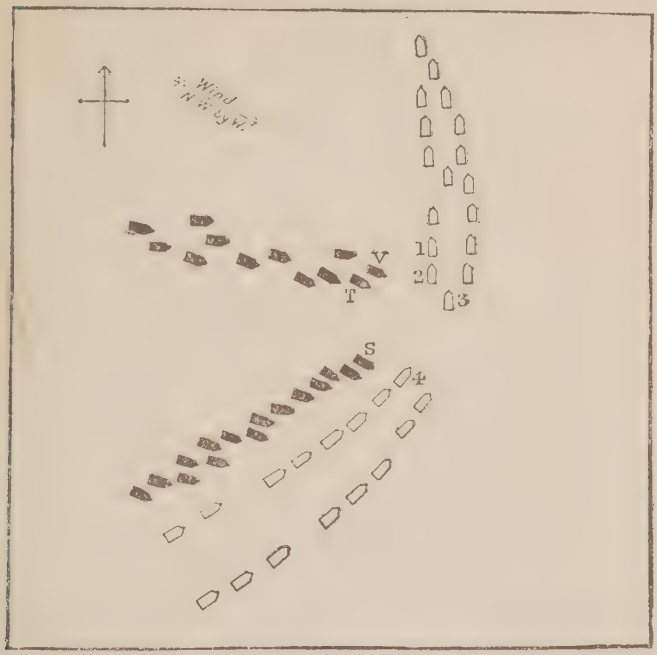
on the morning of the 21st, as the sun rose over Cape Trafalgar, the Allied fleet could be seen. 1805.

The wind had now fallen light, and a swell had set in from the west. There was little manœuvring on either side, for Nelson would not waste time over it, and the Allies were too inefficient to undertake evolutions. The latter did indeed try to form the usual line of battle, but the manœuvre was poorly carried out, and left them in a long, straggling, crescent-shaped curve. Nelson's plan of attack was to advance in two columns, headed respectively by himself, in the *Victory*, and by Collingwood, in the *Royal Sovereign*; and after breaking the enemy's line, to concentrate on the fragments in succession. The plan was well understood, all were prepared, and it only remained to wait till the wind should bring the opposing forces within range of each other's guns. About 11 o'clock it could be seen that the battle would not be much longer delayed, and Nelson retired to his cabin, there on his knees to make a last entry in his private diary. "May the Great God, whom I worship, grant to my Country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory; and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet. For myself, individually, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen. Amen. Amen."

The signal to prepare for battle had been hoisted on the *Victory* at 6.40; one or two brief orders had been added from time to time; and when Nelson returned from his cabin, the last signal was run up to the *Victory's* mast. Collingwood, never over-patient, and now in the unrepressed excitement of coming battle, grumbled that they knew well enough what to do, and he wished Nelson would stop signalling; but none

1805. joined more lustily than he in the cheers that resounded from every British ship, as the fluttering flags conveyed the famous message: "ENGLAND EXPECTS THAT EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY." It was then close on noon, and a few moments later the first Allied gun was discharged at the *Royal Sovereign*: shortly afterwards the *Victory* also was under fire. Each British ship, as she advanced, was exposed to a concentration of fire which was favoured by the enemy's accidental crescent formation, and the slowness of her own progress in the failing wind; but Nelson had counted, and not in vain, upon the bad marksmanship of the enemy's gunners. About twenty minutes past twelve the *Royal Sovereign* pierced the Allied line between the *Santa Ana* and the *Fougeux*. Half an hour later the *Victory* sailed under the stern of the *Bucentaure*, Villeneuve's flag-ship. Each, as she passed, delivered terrific broadsides of round shot and kegs of musket balls, with murderous effect at so close a range, the *Victory*, at one discharge alone, killing over 400 of the *Bucentaure's* crew and dismounting twenty of her guns. Nelson, when he had pierced the line, laid himself alongside the *Redoubtable*, which was also attacked by the *Téméraire*, the second ship in his line; and the three ships next in order first raked, and then grappled in close combat with, the *Bucentaure* and the huge Spanish flag-ship, the *Santisima Trinidad*. Collingwood meantime had clung to the *Santa Ana*, and the rest of his line had wheeled to leeward to concentrate on the ships of the Allied rear and destroy them piecemeal. Every one of the enemy's ships engaged was fought with an obstinate courage that reflects the highest credit on officers and men alike; but mere courage, however brilliant, was powerless to cope with superior seamanship, superior gunnery, and above all with the superior tactics that had broken and confused the Allied line. After an hour of desperate fighting in general *mêlée*, the issue ceased to stand in doubt; and at five o'clock the battle was over.

The Allied fleet was virtually annihilated. Eleven 1805.
dismasted hulks succeeded in limping into Cadiz, and four ships that were never in action fled northwards



THE ATTACK AT TRAFALGAR

S. *Royal Sovereign.*
T. *Téméraire.*
V. *Victory.*
1. *Santisima Trinidad.*
2. *Bucentaure.*
3. *Redoubtable.*
4. *Santa Ana.*

under Admiral Dumanoir; but these four were taken a few days later, and eighteen had already been captured. But the joy of England over so astounding a triumph was turned to mourning when she heard that

the great chief who had led her fleet to victory had been struck down by a chance musket-ball on the deck of his flag-ship. Like Wolfe, Nelson had fallen in the hour of triumph; and like him he had survived long enough to learn that his task was accomplished, and to be consoled in his last moments by the knowledge that he had done his duty. He had indeed done his duty, and that more thoroughly than he himself can have dreamed. "At Trafalgar it was not Villeneuve that failed, but Napoleon that was vanquished; not Nelson that won, but England that was saved."[1] The coffin for Napoleon's Imperial hopes was built; it only remained for Wellington and the nations of Europe to drive home the nails. For ten years longer the struggle continued, but in that struggle Napoleon was foredoomed to failure, for turn where he would, he was everywhere checked by the impassable sea. "On the land, state after state went down before the great soldier who wielded the armies of France and the auxiliary legions of subject countries, added to her standards by his policy. Victory after victory graced his eagles, city after city and province after province were embodied in his empire, peace after peace was wrested from the conquered; but one enemy remained ever erect, unsubdued, defiant; and on the ocean there was neither peace nor truce, until the day when he himself fell under the hosts of foes, aroused by his vain attempt to overthrow, through their sufferings, the power that rested upon the seas."[2]

NOTE.—British acquisitions retained at the peace: Malta, Mauritius and the Seychelles, Tobago, Sta. Lucia, British Guiana, British Honduras, the Straits Settlements, and the Cape.

[1] Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power on History," p. 11.

[2] Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire," vol. ii. p. 98.

CHAPTER X

THE CONSOLIDATION OF BRITISH POWER IN INDIA

Lord Wellesley — War with the Mahrattas — General Lake's successes — General Wellesley's operations: Assaye — War with Holkar—Progress of the Company—Ranjit Singh and the Sikhs — Gough and Hardinge — The Sikhs prepare for war—Moodkee—Gough's advance: Hardinge's interference—Ferozeshah—Gough's plans—Sobraon—End of the First Sikh War—Murder of British officials at Multan—Gough unprepared for war—Lord Dalhousie—Gough takes the field—Chillianwalla—The Sikhs occupy Gujerat—Battle of Gujerat—Lord Gough.

It happened fortunately for England that, while her struggle with Napoleon was passing through its most critical phases, the reins of power in British India were held by a firm hand. Lord Wellesley had gone to India as Governor-General in 1798. He had entered upon his office possessed by a conviction that the latent hostility of the majority of native rulers, the chronic anarchy of their dominions, and the perpetual menace of French intervention demanded from the British a consistent forward policy; and it was to his fearless adoption of such a policy that the overthrow of Tippoo Sahib had been due. The final subjugation of the South had enabled him to turn his attention to another portion of the peninsula which for many years past had been the anxious but unfruitful study of every Indian administrator. Under Lord Wellesley's predecessors our relations with the Mahratta princes of the West had constantly varied, but they had never yet been placed upon a satisfactory basis; we had fought against them with indifferent success, and we had fought

in alliance with them with questionable advantage. Though capable of united action for purposes of aggression, the five chieftains who composed the Mahratta confederacy fought often and stubbornly amongst themselves; and about the time of Tippoo's fall the districts of Central and Western India were distracted by the feuds of contending rulers. A fierce quarrel had broken out between Sindhia of Gwalior and Holkar of Indore, in which the nominal head of the confederacy, the Peishwa, became involved; and in October, 1802, the united forces of Sindhia and the Peishwa were utterly defeated by Holkar in a desperate battle under the walls of the Peishwa's capital. Flying from the wrath of his victorious vassal, and thirsting for revenge, the Mahratta suzerain hastened to Bassein, and appealed to the British for protection and assistance. To this appeal Wellesley listened favourably, welcoming the opportunity which it afforded of imposing peace on turbulent and dangerous neighbours;
1802. and in the month of December a treaty was signed by which the Peishwa bound himself to maintain a British force in his dominions, to make no war without the consent of the East India Company, and to employ no soldiers of nations at war with Great Britain.

The event had now occurred in anticipation of which Napoleon had formed his design of despatching General Decaen's expedition to the East: the British stood irrevocably committed to a life-and-death struggle with a nation intensely jealous of foreign interference; and such a struggle might assume a very serious aspect, should all the Peishwa's vassals co-operate loyally to resist their suzerain's allies. As soon as the terms of the Treaty of Bassein became known, Sindhia, sinking all personal animosities, turned to his late enemy, Holkar, and to the Bhonsla of Nagpur, and called upon them to join him in arming for the preservation of the Mahratta nation. The Bhonsla at once responded to his summons; but Holkar, jealous

of his rival or blind to the peril, hesitated to move, and 1803.
while he hesitated, the British precipitated the crisis. The Governor-General's brother, soon to become famous as the first Duke of Wellington, but now a plain Major-General in command of the British forces in the Deccan, was well aware of the hostile intentions of the allied chiefs, and was resolved to leave them as little time as possible for beating up recruits. He therefore advanced into the Mahratta territories, and after restoring the May.
Peishwa to his capital, called upon Sindhia and the Bhonsla to withdraw to their own dominions. Sindhia replied that he would be happy to do so when the British had set him the example. The message was tantamount to a declaration of war, and was interpreted as such by General Wellesley. "I offered Aug. 6.
you peace on terms of equality," he answered, "and honourable to all parties: you have chosen war and are responsible for all consequences."

Apart from certain small bodies, which were disposed of by the British promptly and effectually, Sindhia had two great armies in the field, one of them under a French General in Hindustan, the other in the Deccan consisting of a combined force of his own and the Bhonsla's troops. In Hindustan, where General Lake was ready to take the offensive with an army of 10,000 men, events moved with extreme rapidity. Sindhia's French General crossed the Jumna early in September, to bar the Delhi road to Lake, who had already taken the town of Aligarh; but he was no match for his opponent, who defeated him under the walls of Delhi on September 11, compelling the French contingent to surrender, and gaining possession of the city. Lake then pressed on without delay, captured Agra on October 18, and on the 31st utterly defeated the Mahratta army on the bloody field of Laswari.

The Deccan campaign was not less favourable to the British. There were two small armies in the province, one of 9,000 men under Colonel Stevenson, the other,

1803. commanded by Wellesley, consisting of 8,500 regular troops, besides artillery and native horse. Wellesley moved out of camp on August 8, and after capturing Ahmadnagar, which covered the Poona road, continued his advance, and a few weeks later effected a junction with Stevenson's division. His intention was to detach Stevenson again, as he approached the enemy, and to manœuvre so that his own and Stevenson's divisions should attack simultaneously from different directions. Stevenson accordingly parted from him on September 22. The next day Wellesley learnt that Sindhia
Sept. 23. with 50,000 men and not less than 130 guns was posted on the further bank of the river Kaitna, between the villages of Bokerdun and Assaye, within a few miles of his own position. The news took him completely by surprise, for scouting had been rendered impossible by the clouds of Mahratta horsemen who scoured the country, and he had supposed the main force of the enemy to be still at a considerable distance. In the circumstances in which he was placed, he ought, by all the recognised rules of war, either to have fallen back swiftly out of reach of Sindhia, or to have waited until Stevenson could be recalled and a rest given to his own men, who were fatigued by a twenty-mile march. He was convinced, however, that it would be dangerous to delay and disastrous to retreat, and he resolved to venture upon one of those infractions of the recognised rules which, like acts of disobedience on the part of a subordinate, can be justified only by success: he would move his own small force along the flank of Sindhia's huge array, would throw it across the river, and attack forthwith. He therefore told his guides to lead him to the nearest ford, but was met with the objection that the Kaitna was unfordable. It was assuredly more than possible that any ford which existed might be held by the enemy in strength; but it seemed incredible to the General that there should be no ford at all, especially after riding forward to reconnoitre, when he

noticed two villages close to one another on opposite sides of the stream, from which it seemed certain that some means of passage must exist. His reasoning was just: there was a ford between the villages; Sindhia had neglected to guard it; and by three o'clock 5,000 British troops had crossed the Kaitna, and stood in readiness to attack. The battle which followed was sharp but brief; by six o'clock Sindhia's army had been driven in confusion from the field, leaving upwards of a hundred guns in the hands of the victors. 1803.

A heavy price was paid for the victory, the casualties amongst Wellesley's men amounting to close upon one-third of the entire force engaged; but the Mahrattas also had suffered severely, and when Wellesley again came up with them on November 27 at Argaum, he won an easy victory that finally crushed their resistance. It then only remained to deal with Holkar, who had been spurred to action by the successes of the British; and if the Governor-General had been permitted to carry out his policy to its logical conclusion, the Mahratta power would have been broken for good and all, for a year of hard fighting brought Holkar likewise to the brink of ruin. But unhappily the fortune of war had favoured him at the outset of the campaign; and a paroxysm of terror had been produced at the Directorial Board by the news that he had repulsed and well-nigh destroyed an inadequate British force sent against him under an incompetent commander, that he had invaded the territories of the Company, and that the city of Delhi was besieged. Lord Wellesley was hastily recalled, and by a shameful treaty with Holkar the prize was abandoned on the eve of triumph. But it was easier for the Directors to censure an over-zealous Governor-General than to escape from the extension of British control over unfriendly or turbulent neighbours which Lord Wellesley had favoured, and which the condition of India, and the position that the Company had now assumed within it, had converted into 1804.

an imperious necessity. Lord Wellesley's successors, however much they might desire to adhere to a policy of non-intervention, were powerless to resist the march of events. In 1814 Lord Hastings was driven to go to war with the Ghurka state of Nepal, which at length ceded a part of its territories, and accepted the British
1818. as its suzerains. Three years later he was called upon to complete the work which had been interrupted by Wellesley's recall, and to undertake the final subjugation of the Mahratta confederacy. As in the case of his predecessor, his activity drew down upon him an angry censure from home; but the laws of Indian progress remained inexorable, and his successors were committed
1824–1826. in rapid succession to the conquest of the Burmese provinces of Assam, Tenasserim, and Arakan, and to the
1843. annexation of the Indian states of Sindh and Gwalior.

In the meanwhile a heavy cloud had darkened the political horizon. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, a Sikh prince, Ranjit Singh, had risen to power at Lahore, and in the course of a long reign he had contrived, by firm government within and crafty aggression without, to lay the foundations of a powerful state beyond the Sutlej. He had throughout his life entertained a profound admiration for the British, which had not been lessened by the fate that had overtaken the Mahratta chieftains; and the friendly relations with the Company that he had been astute enough to cherish, had contributed materially to the prosperity of his rule. The British on their part had likewise profited by Sikh friendship: Ranjit himself had preserved Sikh neutrality during the Mahratta wars, and his successor, Shere Singh, inheriting his views along with his throne, had held the Sikhs in check during the critical period when a Governor-General, blundering into an Afghan war, despatched
1839–1842. a British army of 10,000 men to annihilation in the Afghan mountains. It was the interruption of this friendship with the Sikhs that was now to be feared.

Scarcely had the Cabul disaster been avenged when Shere Singh was murdered, and the real power at Lahore passed into the hands of the great military organisation of the Sikh race known as the Khalsa, whose members were compounded of a dangerous Oriental blend of Jacobin, Nazarite, and Crusading Templar. It was well known that the Khalsa was deeply hostile to the British: it had viewed our annexation of Sindh with suspicion; our Afghan policy had excited at once its fear and its contempt; and it looked forward to a career of conquest which must inevitably bring it into collision with the peacemakers of India. A Sikh incursion was therefore probable, and it would be a peril of no ordinary kind. Sept. 1843.

The situation was a matter of anxious concern to those who were responsible for the safety of British India. With the Commander-in-Chief, Gough, military considerations were very naturally and very properly paramount: he knew the Khalsa to be capable of putting into the field an army of 50,000 soldiers of the most warlike race in Asia, whose native fanaticism was rendered terrible by Western training, and he was haunted by the fear of being taken unawares. The Governor-General, Hardinge, had been sent to India for the express purpose of reversing the forward policy so obnoxious to the Directors, and that which weighed most with him was the danger of precipitating a crisis by making "military preparations that might excite remark." As has happened to other British soldiers in the face of a military crisis, Gough was therefore prevented by the civil authority from taking the steps which military prudence enjoined. The precautions which he was allowed to take were such only as, in Hardinge's opinion, could arouse no suspicion across the Sutlej: he was authorised to halt the troops returning from Sindh, to reinforce his advanced posts at Ludhiana and Ferozepore, and to strengthen his base at

Umballa:[1] but preparations limited by deference to the feelings of the enemy could not be expected to satisfy the British Commander-in-Chief. "The Sikh Artillery," wrote Gough, "are good; they are bringing into the field a much larger force than we are, even as aggressors; if on the defensive, they will treble ours, with much heavier metal. Our advantage will, and ever must be Manœuvre, and the irresistible rush of British Soldiers. Cavalry and Artillery are excellent arms in aid, but it is Infantry alone can in India decide the fate of every battle. Our six-pounders are pop-guns . . . but if we have to go into the Punjab, we may look forward to being opposed by from 250 to 300 Guns in position, many of them of large Calibre."[2] It was clear to the Commander-in-Chief that a Sikh war, should it break out, would be no child's play.

1845. In the meantime the Khalsa had been carrying all before it at Lahore, and the Khalsa meant to have war as soon as it should be ready to take the field. In November the British agent at the Sikh capital, Major Broadfoot, was informed on high authority that war was inevitable; a few days later he reported that a Sikh invasion was imminent; and on the 20th he announced that the plan had been settled, and that from 40,000 to 60,000 troops were to be employed. Gough at once made ready to set his troops in motion, but on the 23rd Broadfoot began to think that he had exaggerated the peril, and the Governor-General, clinging to the hope of preserving peace, countermanded the orders which the Commander-in-Chief had issued. Gough was less optimistic: he was anxious on the score of Ferozepore, where 7,000 British troops, for the most part native, were stationed on the frontier a hundred and fifty miles from the nearest support; and his anxiety deepened into alarm when he learnt that Hardinge had gone

[1] An enlarged plan of the Punjaub is given with the map of India at p. 296.

[2] R. S. Rait, "Life of Lord Gough," vol. i. p. 374.

forward to inspect the frontier, and that the Sikh armies had crossed the Sutlej. He considered that "it would be a fearful thing to have a Governor-General bagged." 1845.

In his alarm for the safety of the Head of the Indian Government Gough moved forward with rapidity, and on December 18 the united Ludhiana and Umballa sections of his force, amounting to 10,000 men, arrived at Moodkee. It was about midday, and the men set to work to prepare a camp; but they had not been long at work when the picquets announced that dust-clouds could be descried in the distance, heralding the approach of troops, and a lively cannonade was shortly afterwards opened from the neighbouring jungle. It would seem probable that the Sikhs had under-estimated the strength of the advancing British column, for the force which they had sent ahead to attack Gough at Moodkee consisted of no more than 12,000 men with 22 guns, and these were repulsed with great slaughter by Gough's men, the 3rd Light Dragoons and the infantry under Sir Harry Smith gaining particular distinction. It was something to have defeated the Khalsa's troops in the first combat of the campaign, but the success did not materially improve the General's position. With the exception of two European and two native regiments, which joined him the day after the battle, he could expect no further reinforcements for some time, and he had to give attention to three objects, distinct, yet equally important. The main Sikh force under Lal Singh had taken up a heavily entrenched position at Ferozeshah, leaving a corps of observation under Tej Singh to watch Littler at Ferozepore; and Gough was under the threefold necessity of maintaining his communications in rear, of joining hands with Littler ahead, and, in view of his great inferiority in numbers, of attacking the enemy's main force during the absence of Tej Singh's division. The difficulty lay in the fact that he could not advance to Ferozepore

1845. without uncovering his line of communication, whilst, if Littler should attempt to retreat upon the main body, there was the risk of his being intercepted, and the presumption that Tej Singh would hasten to Ferozeshah, as soon as ever Littler moved. In the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief the importance of dealing with the enemy in detail was paramount to all other considerations, and on the evening of December 20 he prepared to attack Lal Singh betimes on the morrow, sending word to Littler to come and lend a hand if he could. Accordingly in the darkness of the next winter morning the army moved out from its camp at Moodkee, and a little after ten o'clock it was halted in front of the Sikh entrenchments at Ferozeshah, to snatch a hurried breakfast, while Gough went forward to reconnoitre. Whilst thus engaged he learnt that Littler had adroitly slipped away from Ferozepore without attracting Tej Singh's attention; and with the knowledge that he could thus count on a valuable reserve being brought into action at the critical moment, he rode up to Hardinge and promised him a splendid victory. To his astonishment and dismay, Hardinge expressed "no small surprise" at such an "extraordinary proposal," conveniently ignoring the decision arrived at over-night, which had not brought the army to the foot of the Sikh entrenchments for the purpose of providing an agreeable object for a morning stroll. The melancholy truth was that, although Hardinge had been a soldier, some thirty years had passed since he had seen active service; as Secretary of State for War he had unlearnt the lessons of his youth; and he stood in awe of the character, the numbers, and the position of the Sikhs. The situation in which he was placed was sufficiently ludicrous, for after Moodkee he had volunteered his services as second-in-command to Gough, in which capacity he was now required to execute orders of which, as Governor-General, he strongly disapproved: and like Sir W. S. Gilbert's Lord Chan-

cellor, who hesitated whether he could give himself his own consent to marry his own ward, he wondered whether as Governor-General he could relieve himself, as second-in-command, of an uncongenial duty. In the end the Governor-General got the best of it; and the army, instead of attacking, resumed its march towards Ferozepore. 1845.

It was not the easiest thing in the world to reform an army in face of a largely superior enemy, and to march it safely across the front of that enemy's position; but the operation was safely carried out, and at an early hour of the afternoon the main British force got into touch with Littler's division. At half-past three the troops found themselves "fronting the southern and western faces of the Ferozeshah entrenchments tired and hungry, just as they had faced the eastern face at eleven o'clock fresh and vigorous." Shortly afterwards, a little before four o'clock, the artillery on either side opened fire; but the Sikh guns were much heavier and more numerous than our own, and it soon became clear that the duel could not long be maintained. There was another reason why the general assault had to be hastened. Littler had attacked prematurely; he had blundered on the biggest guns in the enemy's entrenchments; his tired Sepoys had behaved indifferently; and his brigade had been driven back with heavy loss. With weary troops, deprived of their reserves by an ill-judged assault, and depressed by an initial repulse, the Commander-in-Chief had now to retrieve the position of his army. The order to advance was given, and in the failing light the troops moved forward to their task. The Sikh position had been skilfully fortified, their guns were heavy and well served, and their infantry fought with the stubborn determination always displayed by the men of their warlike race; but neither shot, nor shells, nor bullets, nor entanglements, nor exploding magazines availed to check the forward rush

1845. of Gough's undaunted soldiers, and nearly the whole of the Sikh entrenchments had been carried when darkness closed upon the scene.

Then was seen in unveiled grotesqueness the folly of the Governor-General's decision. With another hour of daylight Lal Singh's army would have been converted into a flying rabble, chased across the Sutlej by the victorious British, with the army of Tej Singh participators of the disaster. But the daylight was gone; the scattered detachments of British had to be recalled, and the entrenched lines evacuated; and the victors were constrained to spend the night under arms in cold and darkness, exhausted by prolonged marching and scanty food, and afraid to light fires lest the guns of the defeated enemy should be brought back to increase their troubles. It was an anxious night for Gough and Hardinge, as they showed, not by their words, indeed, but by their actions; for the Governor-General's valuables were sent away for safety, and preparations were made for destroying all State Papers at Moodkee, should the army be destroyed during the approaching day. When that day dawned at length, the entrenched lines and the village of Ferozeshah were reoccupied without difficulty; but no sooner was this accomplished than that which Gough had foreseen and dreaded came to pass: his men were tired out, his horses completely done up, his guns without ammunition, and he had word that the army of Tej Singh was at hand, fresh, vigorous, and confident of success.

Such was the fierceness of the Sikh cannonade, and such the fury of their attack, that it seemed for a while as though all must be lost: the Sepoys grew unsteady, and even the white men wavered; and as the Commander-in-Chief rode forward into the vortex of shot and shell, to inspirit his troops by his own example, it was with regret in his heart that each passing shot should leave him on horseback. Dismay would have deepened into despair, had he known what was occur-

ring in the midst of his own force. An officer of the Headquarters staff, whose mind had been unhinged by sunstroke, appeared in his pyjamas, alleging that "his overalls had been so riddled with bullets that they had dropped off," and making his way to the cavalry and artillery divisions, he ordered them to proceed to Ferozepore. Without questioning the officer's authority the divisions obeyed the order, and were presently seen in full retreat, leaving to Tej Singh the simple task of annihilating the weary and wavering Infantry divisions. Providentially for the British, Tej Singh took a different view of the situation. He had already been discouraged by the unlooked-for resistance of Gough's forces, and in the extraordinary movement of troops towards his rear his fears detected the aggressive tactics of a strong and confident enemy. A charge of the invincible 3rd Light Dragoons deepened his alarm, and at the moment when victory was within his grasp he hurriedly withdrew his army from the field. So ended the long combat that bears the name of Ferozeshah. Many lives had, indeed, been lost, but an important object had been gained, an imminent disaster averted, and all fear of an invasion of British India removed. In the opinion of a very eminent soldier, no sacrifice was too great to prevent the junction of the two Sikh forces. "The object was to defeat the one before the other should come to its aid. No sacrifice is too great to complete such a manœuvre. Every risk must be run, and every fatigue endured to attain such an object in war. The entrenched camp was attacked and carried. The resistance was indeed terrific, and the loss on our side tremendous. But—this is war." [1] 1845.

With India secured, and the disloyal curbed by his victory, Gough could afford to wait for the reinforcements of which the exigencies of the political situation before the war had deprived him; and he adopted a

[1] Sir Henry Havelock, quoted by Mr. Rait. "Life of Gough," vol. ii. p. 39.

1846. waiting course the more readily that without the siege guns, which had not yet come up, it was useless to advance against Lahore. Some action was, however, necessitated early in January by an incursion of a large Sikh detachment which crossed the Sutlej near Ludhiana; and 8,000 men under Sir Harry Smith were detached for the relief of that fortress. Smith parted from Gough on the 16th, and by a series of rapid and brilliant movements, designed to protect the British line of communications and to pick up isolated corps approaching Ludhiana, he drove the enemy back to Aliwal on the river bank, and there on January 28 decisively defeated them, capturing fifty-two out of their seventy-five guns and destroying the rest. In the meantime the siege train had arrived, and the main army had moved towards Sobraon, where the enemy had taken up a heavily entrenched position on the British side of the Sutlej. This they had been allowed, indeed encouraged, by Gough to do, for he was aware that it was with the Khalsa, and not with the feeble Lahore Government, that peace had to be made, and that there could be no hope of peace until another action had taken place; if that action could be fought with a river in rear of the enemy, and should prove successful, the Khalsa would be brought to terms. It was therefore at Sobraon and not at Lahore that the Commander-in-Chief designed to strike the decisive blow; and the event did not belie his expectations. A general assault on the Sikh position was planned for dawn on February 10, and as the sun rose, Gough's men stood in readiness. The British guns opened fire about 6.30 A.M., but they were as usual inferior to those of the enemy, and after a short and disadvantageous cannonade a message was brought to Gough that through some neglect of his orders the ammunition was all but run out. The message caused him no uneasiness, for he had never expected much from his guns, and was eager to "be at them with the bayonet"; but others were

less resolute, and it was hinted, not obscurely, by officers on the Governor-General's staff, that it would be more prudent to abandon the attack and withdraw the troops. "What!" exclaimed Gough, "withdraw the troops after the action has commenced, and when I feel confident of success? Indeed I will not. Tell Sir Robert Dick to move on, in the name of God." Move on Sir Robert Dick accordingly did, with his division followed and supported by the rest of the army; and the British infantry, plunging irresistibly through heavy fire, across entanglements and trenches, and over ramparts and walls, won their way in one impetuous rush into the midst of the enemy's lines. The Sikhs fought with all, and more than all, their accustomed bravery; but the unfailing 3rd Light Dragoons, whom no obstacle seemed able to check, had followed hard on the heels of the infantry, and no troops could stand against charges of horse and foot in the heart of their position. After the cavalry appeared in the lines, says Gough's despatch, the enemy's "fire first slackened and then nearly ceased; and the victors then pressing them on every side, precipitated them in masses over the bridge, and into the Sutlej, which a sudden rise of seven inches had rendered hardly fordable. In their efforts to reach the right bank, through the deepened water, they suffered from our horse artillery a terrible carnage. Hundreds fell under this cannonade; hundreds upon hundreds were drowned in attempting the perilous passage. Their awful slaughter, confusion, and dismay were such as would have excited compassion in the hearts of their generous conquerors, if the Khalsa troops had not, in the earlier part of the action, sullied their gallantry by slaughtering and barbarously mangling every wounded soldier whom, in the vicissitudes of attack, the fortune of war left at their mercy."[1] 1846

As soon as the tidings of the battle of Sobraon

[1] Rait, "Lord Gough," vol. ii. pp. 62–3.

1846. reached the Sikh capital, the Lahore government sued for peace, offering to cede the district between the Sutlej and the Beas, and either to pay a war indemnity of one and a half millions or in default to surrender the provinces of Cashmere and Hazara. To these terms Hardinge added a stipulation that the twenty-five guns which had been rescued from Sobraon should be given up, and that the Sikh standing army should be restricted to 25,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry at the most. The Sikh envoy having accepted the conditions, the British advanced to Lahore to enforce performance of their bargain, and on March 8 a formal treaty was signed in the Governor-General's tent. By way of amusing the British authorities, one of the Sikh officials present at this Durbar handed round "a small tin box enveloped in a shabby cloth," and in that humble lodging the Koh-i-noor diamond was first revealed to those who ere long were to secure it for the British Crown. After the treaty had been signed, Lord Hardinge[1] tendered his resignation and sailed homewards, confident that his work was finished, and that peace would now prevail for years in India. Scarcely
Jan. 1848. had his successor, Lord Dalhousie, set foot on Indian soil, when an incident occurred that showed to every student of Indian politics that the First Sikh War was not destined to be the last.

After the treaty of 1846 an armed British force had been left at Lahore, to uphold the feeble Sikh government; and much administrative work, which that government was unable to perform, had been shifted onto British shoulders. The change was nowhere acceptable to the local Sikh Governors, and one of them, Mulraj, the Governor of Multan, more than commonly energetic and unscrupulous, resolved that he at all events would refuse to submit to British supervision, should such an indignity ever be offered to

[1] Hardinge and Gough were both raised to the peerage after Sobraon.

him. In due course the time arrived when the affairs of the Multan district called for attention; and in April, 1848, Sir Frederick Currie, the Chief Commissioner at Lahore, despatched Agnew of the Civil Service and Anderson of the Bombay Army to Mulraj's province. Mulraj at once resigned office, but he received the British agents with every mark of respect when they arrived at Multan on the 18th, and agreed to hand over the fort to them on the following morning. The ceremony of taking over the fort was accordingly gone through on the morrow; but as Agnew and Anderson left the building, they were set upon by Mulraj's soldiers. Both were severely wounded, and with difficulty escaped to the Mosque where they had taken up their quarters. That night Agnew sent off a note to Currie, asking for help; but he and his companion were at the mercy of Mulraj, and Mulraj was merciless and swift. During daylight on the 20th the Mosque was bombarded. In the evening the garrison of the fort marched down to the Mosque; the Sikh escort, which had accompanied Agnew and Anderson, went over to Mulraj; the room where the wounded men were lying was entered by Mulraj's ruffians, and its unfortunate occupants were murdered with every refinement of barbarous cruelty. 1848.

From the circumstances attending this outrage there was but too good reason to suppose that the Lahore government had become treacherous, that the Khalsa was growing restive, and that another rising of the whole Punjaub was at hand. For such an event the optimism of the politicians had made the soldiers lamentably unready. Gough considered that he could not safely venture on an invasion of the Sikh territories with less than 24,000 men and seventy-eight guns. The Government had left him with 10,000 men and forty-eight guns, without so much as a cart for transport, and with unworkable commissariat arrangements; and it would clearly be impossible for him to move into

1848. "the hottest locality in India at the worst season of the year." Happily the need for immediate action was the less urgent that Agnew and Anderson could not now be rescued, that the Multan outbreak remained at present an isolated incident, and that a gallant junior officer, Edwardes, with a handful of men, had brilliantly
June 18. contrived to defeat Mulraj in two pitched battles and to shut him within the walls of Multan. But the respite
July 1. was of short duration. Contrary to the advice of all the high authorities in India, Currie decided to attack Multan itself; a British success on September 12 seemed to the Sikh leader, Shere Singh, to imperil the fortress; and afraid to delay any longer, he threw off the mask, joined hands with the rebels at Multan, and called the Khalsa to arms.

Lord Dalhousie, blindfolded, like his predecessor, Hardinge, with the bandage of finance, had lost sight of the maxim which says: "In time of peace prepare for war." In June he had replied to the Commander-in-Chief's appeal for effective preparation that "the force proposed . . . is larger than will be necessary" —a singular opinion for a civilian who had recently landed at Calcutta to address to a General fresh from a campaign on the Punjaub frontier; in July he reiterated his resolve not to incur "expense in preparation until it can no longer be possibly avoided"; and in the middle of September, when Shere Singh had gone over to the rebels and the whole Punjaub was in revolt, it was only with reluctance that he would authorise Gough to collect an army of the size which that General had months ago condemned as utterly inadequate for the maintenance of the honour and safety of British India. A Governor-General had taken a heavy responsibility on himself when he compelled his Commander-in-Chief to write on the eve of war: "I may call spirits from the vasty deep, but will they respond to my call? I may say that an Army should be immediately collected, but where are they to come from? 'That . . . which has

been sanctioned is infinitely too small. . . . Our 1848.
European force is by no means as strong as it ought to be. . . . For a general Punjaub War I am not prepared." What then must have been the writer's surprise, within a fortnight of Shere Singh's defection, to receive from the very man whose wilful blindness and perverse economy had blighted all his hopes, this martial message? "As long as there is a shot or a shell in the Indian arsenals, or a finger left that can pull a trigger, I will never desist from operations at Multan, until the place is taken, and the leader and his force ground if possible into powders. . . . I have therefore to request that your Lordship will put forth all your energies . . . to accomplish this object promptly, fully, and finally. . . . The capture of that fortress [Multan] and the utter destruction, so far as humanity and the ordinary mercy of war will permit, of the Sikh army assembled there, are the first and prime objects of our attention now." Truly, a fiery and a stirring summons! Lord Gough may well have asked himself: Was this the message of the man who for weeks had been ignoring his appeals, spurning his suggestions, neglecting his remonstrances; leaving the ranks of his army depleted, his Sepoys away on furlough, his munitions deficient, his transport non-existent? Or was it the command of a Napoleon, awaiting the issue of months of elaborate preparation, and stretching forth his hand to grasp the half-plucked fruits of a Marengo or an Austerlitz?

Even if Lord Gough had possessed the materials requisite for carrying it into execution, the Governor-General's programme of wholesale slaughter at Multan would have been rendered impracticable by the course of events across the Sutlej. The Lahore government was scarcely at the pains to disguise its enmity; Shere Singh had left Multan to beat up recruits; and district after district and chieftain after chieftain throughout the Sikh territories were rising in rebellion. Gough

1848. was convinced of the necessity of crushing Shere Singh before other rebel forces should swell his ranks, and with this object he advanced from Lahore, driving Shere Singh before him across the Chenab; but he was hampered by the Governor-General, who implored him to hold his hand till reinforcements should come up, as well as by the neglected commissariat arrangements, which did not possess the capacity for lightning transformation that the Governor-General's opinions enjoyed. Accordingly the months of November and December had to be frittered away in inaction, and at the end of them Gough heard that a large Sikh force was marching to join Shere Singh. This junction he determined at all costs to prevent. The cost was not likely to be light, for the Sikhs had 40,000 men and sixty guns to pit against the eleven or twelve thousand men whom Gough could take into action, and they were posted in an entrenched position in the heart of a broken and difficult country. Gough, however, hoped that by attacking their centre near Chillianwalla, he would be able to cut off their irregular troops, and to roll back their regulars upon the jungle on their right.

In pursuance of this plan Gough set his troops in
1849. motion in January, 1849, and on the 13th occupied the village of Chillianwalla. As the Sikh guns opened fire as soon as the British entered the village, it became clear that the enemy, whom it had been impossible to locate precisely in the dense jungle, had come out some way from their entrenchments; and the discovery increased Gough's ardour for an immediate assault. Accordingly, about 1.30 o'clock, after the usual prelude of an artillery duel, a general attack by the whole British line was ordered; and at the end of several hours of vigorous combat the Sikhs were driven from the field. By reason of the nature of the ground, however, of the stubborn gallantry of Shere Singh's infantry and gunners, and of the mistakes of Gough's

divisional leaders, the success was purchased at a terribly heavy cost. In the dense jungle through which the advance had been made, brigades designed for mutual support had lost sight of each other before they had got into action, and had not met again till the battle was over; regiments had become divided and inextricably confused; the artillery had been unable to keep pace with the foot; the foot had been terribly punished by the murderous fire of the Sikh guns; and the reserves ordered up by Gough either had never got clear of the jungle at all, or had emerged from it at the wrong time or in the wrong place. Pope's cavalry brigade in particular had been dogged by misfortune throughout the day. It had first contrived to advance so as to mask the fire of the horse artillery and reduce them to inaction: it had then made a charge, in which the Brigadier was wounded; and finding itself without its commanding officer, it had slackened in its attack, then retreated, and finally fled. Some of Pope's troopers had reached the Field Hospital far away to the British rear before drawing rein, and would not have stopped then, if a military chaplain had not rallied them and induced them to return to the scene of action. The chaplain's services were cordially acknowledged by Gough: he deeply regretted that it did not lie in his power to make him a "Brevet-Bishop" on the spot. 1849.

Accident, which had made the battle of Chillianwalla so unfortunate in itself, was also responsible for the inadequacy of the results obtained by the victory. The day after the battle rain began to fall, and continued uninterruptedly for three days, turning the country into a sea of slimy mud, impassable by horses or guns. Gough had therefore to look on, with such composure as he could command, while the junction between Shere Singh and his reinforcements, which Chillianwalla had been fought to prevent, took place in the entrenchments at Russool. To attack this position was out of the question, not merely on account of its

1849. great strength and the swampy ground in front of it, but by reason also of the enemy's accession of strength, and of the British losses; and there was nothing for it but to wait till the British force engaged at Multan should come to join Gough's army. Gough's only consolation was that the barrenness of the country in the Sikh rear would ere long compel Shere Singh to shift his position; and it was to be hoped that, when he did so, the British would be ready to strike a telling blow. The hope was destined to be realised. Shere Singh moved out of Russool in the early days of February, after vainly striving to lure Gough into an action, and on the 14th posted himself in front of the fort of Gujerat on the banks of the Chenab. Gough followed at his leisure; was joined by the Multan army with its siege guns, and by reinforcements from Bombay, which raised his force to 24,000 men; and on the evening of the 20th approached Gujerat, having succeeded in "preparing the way, by a careful exploration of the ground and by a series of masterly movements, for as crowning a victory as ever smiled upon our arms in India."

The morning of the 21st dawned bright and still, and "the snowy ranges of the Himalayah, forming a truly magnificent background to Gujerat and the village-dotted plain, seemed on that beautiful morning to have drawn nearer, as if like a calm spectator, to gaze on the military spectacle." In the foreground stood the British army in battle array, with bayonets, barrels, and swords flashing in the level rays of the rising sun, and cheering madly as the gallant veteran who had led them to so many victories rode down the front of their line. For the first time in the course of his Indian campaigns Gough was enabled by the arrival of the Multan siege guns to oppose an adequate weight of metal to the Sikh cannon; and the astonishment of the enemy was great when they found themselves driven back by the gun-fire of an army which, as they supposed, was provided with no proper guns or was

ignorant how to use them. "The cannonade now opened upon the enemy," said the British General, "was the most terrible I ever witnessed, and as terrible in its effect. The Sikh guns were served with their accustomed rapidity, and the enemy well and resolutely maintained his position; but the terrific force of our fire obliged them, after an obstinate resistance, to fall back." "We stood two hours in hell," said a Sikh officer, "and, after that, we saw six miles of infantry." 1849.

The British guns opened fire at nine o'clock, and for two hours and a half the pitiless storm of shot and shell fell unceasingly in the Sikh lines. As the hour of noon approached, it seemed to Lord Gough that the time had come to hurl his infantry at the shaken enemy. Between his centre and the Sikh fort at Gujerat was a walled village, which appeared to be unoccupied, and on this the first onslaught was made; but the village turned out to be strongly held, a tremendous fire of musketry was opened from the loop-holed walls as the British approached, and the attacking regiments were severely punished before the enemy could be put to flight. With this exception the fighting, though severe, especially on the British right, was never doubtful throughout the day. The Sikh gunners stuck to their guns with grim tenacity, and their infantry fought with the stubborn courage they had displayed on so many stricken fields; but havoc had been wrought throughout their army by the merciless British cannonade, an attempted counter-attack was repulsed with heavy loss, and by one o'clock the Sikhs were flying to the Jhelum with the British cavalry in full pursuit, leaving to the victors their camp, their baggage, and their guns. What Gough had hoped to do at Chillianwalla, he had now, with adequate artillery, sufficient troops, and capable subordinates, carried out in completeness at Gujerat. Calmly making ready whilst politicians and journalists shrieked and howled, he had contrived, when the hour came, to shatter the

Khalsa at a blow, and to add the Punjaub to the Queen's dominions.[1]

Towards the close of his career Ranjit Singh, the founder of the Sikh State, had been shown a map of India which had been issued by the Indian Government. After examining it curiously he had asked: "What are all those red circles?" He was told that they marked the extent of the British dominions. Kicking the map from him with an oath, he had expressed his mournful conviction that it would all be red soon. Scarcely ten years had elapsed since his death, and his anticipations had been realised, thanks to the Army of the Punjaub and to the brave and skilful veteran who had led it to victory. Lord Gough had never asked his men to encounter a danger in which he was not ready to share; he had never commanded a soldier by whom he was not loved; he had never been opposed to an enemy by whom he was not feared; and he had never fought a battle which he had not won. Hampered at every step by official censure, and by popular abuse, he had encountered the most warlike and best organised army that had ever taken the field against the British in India; in the course of two campaigns he had wrested victory from that enemy on five well-fought fields; and in the opinion of the Duke of Wellington, whose approval was the highest honour to which a soldier of his day could aspire, he had afforded on every occasion "the brightest example of the highest qualities of the British soldier."

[1] For the final steps in the consolidation of British power in India, see the Table of the British Empire at the beginning of the volume.

CHAPTER XI

THE INDIAN MUTINY

Discontent in India—The Sepoy Army—The new cartridges—Outbreak at Barrackpore—Outbreak at Meerut—The mutineers seize Delhi—The Magazine blown up—The British advance—The British hold the Ridge—Capture of Delhi—Cawnpore—The siege—The massacre—Lucknow—Battle of Chinhut—The Residency besieged—Arrival of Havelock—Havelock's advance—Sir Colin Campbell's advance—Gallantry of Thomas Kavanagh—Arrival of Campbell; death of Havelock—Windham attacked at Cawnpore—The end of the Mutiny.

The Empire of India had now been won: it was yet to be seen whether that Empire could be held. Profiting by the example of their French rivals, the East India Company had learnt how to conquer native powers by arming native troops to subdue them, but the maintenance of dominion in peace was a problem far different from the extension of dominion by war, and amongst those who were best fitted to form a sane judgment there were some at least who "expected to awake some fine morning and find that India had been lost to the British Crown." The apprehension was aroused by their conviction that, however great the benefit which the rule of the Company might have conferred upon the people of the peninsula, an alien government could not in the nature of things be entirely agreeable to the governed. It could not be agreeable to those who had been accustomed to exercise power, nor to those who had thrived on the chicanery, corruption, and intrigue of native politics, nor to those whose business and pleasure had lain in the organisation of robbery and plunder. These classes were not large, but they

comprised all the men of energy, ambition, and influence in India; they were actuated by the powerful motive of self-interest; they could find a figure-head in the titular monarch at Delhi in whom the traditional majesty of the Moghul Empire was embodied; and they could look for a certain measure of popular support. The Oriental, with his intense conservatism, cherished a taste for the oppression and misrule sanctified by the experience of centuries; change and progress perplexed him; an honest government was a novelty, inexplicable and suspicious. The disaffected treasured in their hearts an ancient prediction that had foretold the downfall of the Company at the end of a hundred years from Plassey, which had established its rule; and they rejoiced in secret that the centenary of Plassey was at hand.

The hopes of the discontented turned upon the weakness of the European garrisons and the unrest of the Sepoy army. Many white regiments had been recalled for service in the Crimea, and had never been replaced; the Punjaub provinces had absorbed a large part of those which were left; and of the officers who held commands in Hindustan too few were capable of maintaining discipline or of inspiring respect. The Sepoy army, on the other hand, had grown dangerously large, and the native politicians had inaugurated a campaign of calumny and intrigue in its ranks well calculated to arouse it to a consciousness of power and to imbue it with a sense of wrong. It was insinuated, with adroit malice, that the British had determined to force Christianity upon their Sepoy troops, and that they designed to accomplish their object by issuing orders which involved a violation of the religious rules both of the Mohammedan and of the Hindu. At any other time the sound sense of the Sepoys would have detected the absurdity of this suggestion, but events had lately occurred that had made them uneasy and suspicious. In the first place, they had been alarmed by the

indiscretions of individual officers, by the activity and enterprise of many of the Christian missionaries, and by the injudicious zeal for reform which had been displayed by Lord Dalhousie's subordinates in Oude. In the next place, in the Sepoy army, as in the army of France under the old *régime*, there was a not unnatural feeling of discontent that no career should have been opened to talent. Moreover, the Burmese wars had given rise to considerable dissatisfaction. The Bengal army, apart from its Sikh and Ghurka regiments, was composed in the main of high-caste Hindus, to whom it was a degradation to journey by sea to another country. So long as these men had been required only for Indian service, it had been possible to pay regard to their susceptibilities without limiting their usefulness; but the inconvenience of the religious restriction had been felt acutely during the Burmese troubles, and the terms of their enlistment had afterwards been modified so as to include a liability for over-sea service. This modification had excited profound apprehension and dismay throughout the Bengal army, and an explosive condition had been produced which the smallest spark might fire.

Towards the close of the year 1856 it was decided that the old-fashioned musket in use in the Indian army should be replaced with the new Enfield rifle, and many new cartridges for use in the new weapon were manufactured and served out. These cartridges had to be bitten before being placed in the rifle, and the agitators at once proclaimed that they had been introduced solely in order to compel the troops to bite a paper greased with the fat of pigs and cows. To the Mohammedan Sepoy the tasting of pig's fat was a defilement by a thing unclean. To the Hindu the flesh of cows was sacred, not to be eaten without loss of caste; and "to the Brahmin Sepoy the loss of caste meant becoming an outcast, an object of loathing and disgust. It brought shame and misery upon his wife and

children; it deprived him of the consolation of his religion; and it entailed upon him, instead of an eternity of happiness, an eternity of woe."[1] Before so appalling a prospect the Sepoy lost his reason, and the Government protested in vain that the grease was harmless, being made of mutton-fat and wax. In
1857. January, 1857, a labourer employed in the magazine at Dum-Dum was refused water by a Sepoy on the ground that his caste was unknown. The labourer at once retorted that his caste did not matter much, seeing that the Sepoy would soon lose his through biting the new cartridges. The incident produced a marked effect; and there were disquieting symptoms elsewhere,
Jan.–Feb. especially at Barrackpore, near Calcutta, and at Berhampore, near Moorshedabad, where divers acts of incendiarism and of mutiny were committed by the Sepoys, by way of protest against the introduction of the obnoxious new cartridge.

Still graver tidings were shortly to reach the Government. In the afternoon of Sunday, March 29, Lieutenant Baugh, the adjutant of the 34th Native Infantry, was lying in his quarters at Barrackpore, when a non-commissioned officer rushed in, to tell him that his regiment had turned out on the parade-ground, where a Sepoy, called Mungul Pandy, drunk with excitement and *bhang*, was haranguing the men and inciting them to mutiny. Baugh at once put on his uniform and rode to the ground. As he approached, Mungul Pandy fired at him, wounding his horse; and horse and man fell rolling in the dust. Scrambling to his feet, Baugh could see the mutineer reloading, so he drew his pistol and fired. The shot missed, and Baugh dashed forward with sword drawn, his sergeant-major at his side. A brief scuffle ensued; the officer was cut down by Mungul Pandy, the sergeant by another mutineer; and both must have been killed, had not a Mohammedan Sepoy seized Mungul Pandy and held him, while they escaped.

[1] Forrest, "History of the Indian Mutiny," vol. i. p. 5.

In the meantime General Hearsey, in command of the station, had heard of the commotion, and he now rode onto the parade-ground, accompanied by his sons. In front of him was Mungul Pandy, striding to and fro, and calling shrilly on his comrades to join him, in the name of their religion and their caste. As soon as the General appeared, Mungul Pandy covered him with his musket, and an officer shouted, "Have a care; his musket is loaded." "Damn his musket," answered the iron-nerved veteran, and hastened on to secure his man. "Father," called out his son a moment later, "Father, he is taking aim at you; look out sharp." Then came a flash and a burst of smoke and the sound of a whistling bullet; and a man fell heavily to the ground. But it was not General Hearsey. Mungul Pandy's nerve had failed him in the presence of his General, and he had turned his weapon against himself. Ordering him to be removed to hospital, Hearsey rode amongst the assembled troops, reproached them for the passive part they had played, and assured them that they need fear no harm to their religion so long as he was in command. He then told them to go quietly to their lines, which they did; and so closed that Sunday evening at Barrackpore. The first blood in the mutiny had been shed. 1857.

Several weeks of uneventful quiet followed this incident, dispelling any sense of danger which it had aroused, and leaving unruffled the composure of the British authorities. Mungul Pandy recovered from his wound, and a week after his outbreak was executed in the presence of the Barrackpore garrison, together with a Sepoy officer who had been implicated in the revolt. The men who had mutinied at Berhampore were dismissed from the Company's service, and on the recommendation of the Governor-General, Lord Canning, Lieutenant Baugh's regiment, the 34th Native Infantry, was publicly disbanded and disgraced. In the meantime Colonel Smyth, commanding a cavalry regi- May 6.

1857. ment at the military station of Meerut, near Delhi, had detected symptoms of disaffection among his men, and it was reported that there was a general conspiracy to refuse to handle the new cartridges. A parade was accordingly ordered for the purpose of explaining to the Sepoys how they might use the cartridges without biting them, ninety men being selected, fifteen from
May 9. each troop, to receive instruction. The men assembled; an officer showed them how to load their rifles; and the cartridges were then produced: but eighty-five men out of the ninety refused to touch them. The eighty-five men were presently arrested, tried by a court composed of native officers, and condemned to hard labour for ten years. The sentence involved public degradation, and on May 9, in the presence of the whole Meerut garrison, the prisoners were stripped of their uniforms, fettered with iron on the ankles, and marched away to gaol. The painful ceremony passed off in quiet, broken only by the culprits' passionate appeals to their comrades to come and deliver them; but although no immediate response to these appeals was made, the mutineers were regarded as martyrs by the spectators of their degradation, who believed every whit as firmly as they in the contamination of the cartridges and in the wickedness of the British. The seed of a bloody harvest had been sown.

At this time there were scarcely any European troops in Bengal, and the Bengal Sepoys had conspired for a simultaneous revolt at the close of the month. But the Meerut troops, maddened by the incident of the 9th, determined to anticipate the appointed hour, and to revolt at once. The next day, the 10th, being a Sunday, was well suited to their purpose, for they knew that at evening the European soldiers would be at church unarmed. Sunday came, a day of intense heat, and the British officers lay in their quarters, dozing in darkened rooms, till the church bells rang out at evening, to summon them to worship. As they drove

to church, the rattle of musketry broke on their ears, 1857.
and smoke rose to the sky; the Sepoys had broken open the gaol, had murdered Colonel Finnis of the 11th, who tried to steady them, and had begun the work of massacre and arson. At Meerut, almost alone amongst the stations of the north-west, there was a considerable force of British in the garrison, and the outbreak could have been speedily put down, had a Hearsey been in command; but there was no Hearsey, nor any one of his stamp after Finnis's death; and when the white troops were at length called out, every European outside the British lines had been murdered, and the mutineers had marched off in triumph along the Delhi road.

In the city of Delhi, the traditional capital of the land, the Moghul Emperor still held sway over the 12,000 souls who lived in his palace-fortress. The desire of the Mohammedans who joined in the Mutiny was to restore a Mohammedan King at Delhi; and the Hindus, "having mutinied about a cartridge, had nothing to propose for an Empire, and fell in, of necessity, with the only policy which was feasible at the moment." Accordingly, when the Meerut troopers reached Delhi at dawn on the 11th, they forced their way into the Royal palace, and demanded clamorously that Bahadur Shah should place himself at their head. Bahadur Shah bore the Imperial title, but he lacked imperial aspirations, being aged, sluggish, and peaceable; and when he learnt the cause of the disturbance, he sent to Captain Douglas, who commanded his guards, to inform him of what was taking place. Douglas hastened to the spot, and from a balcony in the courtyard reproached the troopers for creating a disturbance so near the Royal apartments. He then hurried to the Calcuttta Gate to join the chief authorities in securing the entrance to the city; but the gate, which a word from Meerut might have closed to the mutineers, was already in their possession, and the rabble of the

1857. bazaars was turning out to join them there. Fraser, the Commissioner, began to expostulate with the Sepoys, but a gun was discharged at him from the crowd, whereupon he snatched up a musket and fired point-blank at the nearest trooper, who fell dead at his feet. For a moment the mob recoiled. Then in a paroxysm of fury it rushed at the white men who had defied it, Fraser, Douglas, and the Collector, Hutchinson; drove them into the palace, bruised and wounded; there with the aid of the King's servants murdered them, together with the chaplain, his daughter, and her young friend, who came to their aid; and then, drunk with blood and fury, dispersed over the city to slay the Europeans and set fire to their homes.

All hopes of saving the city were then at an end, but the British had not yet lost the great Magazine, in which cannon, rifles, and ammunition for a whole army lay stored. The fate of the great store-house, and with it, perhaps, the fate of India, rested with the nine Europeans within its walls, Lieutenants Willoughby, Forrest, and Raynor, and six conductors and two sergeants of the Bengal artillery; they could look for no aid, for the natives in the arsenal would decamp at the first alarm, and the Sepoy garrison of Delhi had already assisted with derisive jeers at the murder of their officers in the streets. Willoughby, who was in charge, made his plans quickly. The gates were closed and barred. Inside each of the principal entrances were placed two cannon, crammed with grape-shot; and beside each cannon was posted a sergeant with burning fuse, ready to ignite the charge as soon as ever the gates should be broken in. Other guns, ten in all, were placed in position; and all was ready.

In a few minutes the Emperor's guards appeared, and demanded admission in their master's name. No response was made. Scaling-ladders were then placed against the walls, and the enemy came swarming on to the ramparts. A hot fire was opened upon them, but

ever, as the foremost fell, there pressed up others from 1857.
the rear, and in a few moments the valiant nine looked up at a sea of swarthy faces and a girdle of ramparts belching fire. Two of the nine were hit, and fell. A moment later, Forrest and a conductor, Buckley, who in the ceaseless storm of shot had been working their guns with the precision of parade-ground drill, were wounded at their work, and not a gun was left in action. A yell of exultation rises from the walls, but the Magazine is not yet won. Lieutenant Willoughby glances at the seething mob on the ramparts, and then he turns and raises his hand. Behind him stands Conductor Scully, a lighted fuse in hand, watching intently. Scully sees the signal, and lowers his fuse. Beneath it is a train laid to the powder magazine; and a moment later, in a chaos of fire and smoke and crashing noise, the Magazine at Delhi is blown to fragments, saved from the rebels by the devoted nine, of whom Willoughby and Forrest, dazed and blackened, escape as by miracle from the ruin they have wrought.

The Commander-in-Chief, General Anson, had gone to Simla, to recruit his health, and it was there that the news of the Meerut outbreak and of the loss of Delhi reached him. He realised the gravity of the situation and the necessity for immediate action; but there were only three English regiments near him, they were unprepared with siege guns and transport for active operations, and a premature attempt to recapture Delhi might lead to a disaster more fatal than its loss. All possible precautions were taken, all possible measures put in hand. The safety of the military stations of India was provided for; the attitude of the Sikh and other princes was narrowly watched; and communications with Meerut were established by Lieutenant Hodson, who, with a rest of two hours for sleep and food, rode 150 miles there and back to obtain for the General the information and the papers he required.

1857. Anson's plan was to advance on Delhi with two brigades from Umballa and one from Meerut; but he was not destined to carry the plan into operation, for on May 25 he was suddenly attacked by cholera, and in a few hours was dead. His successor, Barnard, pressed on the preparations, and advancing to Alipur, was joined there on June 7 by the Meerut brigade, exulting over a severe repulse which it had just inflicted on a force of rebels that had attempted to bar its way. All through the force the enthusiasm of the men ran high —so high that even the sick pretended that they were well, lest they should lose the chance of fighting. The enthusiasm was needed: without it the little army could never have undertaken the stern work of the coming weeks.

On the day the Meerut brigade marched into camp, General Barnard continued his advance from Alipur. At Badli-Sarai, rather more than half-way along the road to Delhi, he found a rebel force, strong in numbers and guns, stationed athwart his path in a strong position; but this force he attacked at daylight
June 8. on the morrow, and driving it back with heavy loss, fought his way throughout a long day of continuous battle to a position on the Delhi Ridge. He had thus succeeded in his immediate object, but his situation was far from enviable. His tiny army was exhausted and ill supplied; nor could any substantial reinforcements be expected for a considerable time. Before him lay the great Moghul capital, with seven miles of lofty walls, protected by bastions heavily armed, by a great glacis, and a huge ditch; and behind those walls lay the rapidly growing thousands in the ranks of the mutineers, every one of whom was a disciplined soldier, and every one of whom would fight with the desperate courage of those who can feel the halter round the neck. On the 9th, the day after the British reached the Ridge, the first sortie was made by the enemy, and
June 10 and 11. proved a failure. The next day, and the day after, the

rebels attempted to turn Barnard's rear and to storm a 1857.
building known as Hindu Rao's House, the key of his position, hoping that Major Reid's Ghurkas, by whom it was garrisoned, would desert their post; but the Ghurkas stood firm and repulsed the assault. On the 12th there was more hard fighting of a still more serious nature, several of the weak spots in the British position being attacked by different parties of the enemy. Five days later it was discovered that a battery was being constructed to enfilade the British lines, necessitating an assault by two small columns to drive off the enemy and demolish their handiwork. The 19th and the 23rd were each marked by long and stubborn combats along the sides of the Ridge, the fighting on the 23rd being especially severe, for it was the centenary of Plassey, when the rebels looked for the crowning mercy which was to deliver India from British rule.

The record of these early weeks may serve for the record of the whole three months' siege. Scarcely a day passed but what the little army who kept the flag flying on the Ridge had some position to defend, some sortie to repulse, some movement of the enemy to foil. Seven times in the course of the next month were Barnard's soldiers called upon to undergo the ordeal of prolonged and doubtful battle, and to oppose to variable fortune their grim, unvarying resolve. Barnard was struck down by cholera on July 5, and on the 17th his successor, General Reed, likewise succumbed to anxiety and fatigue, his place being taken by General Wilson of the Artillery. Wilson was a man whose iron nerve and inflexible determination pre-eminently fitted him for the arduous post; and he could rely on the ability of his subordinates. Towards the end of June reinforcements from the Punjaub had reached the British camp, and General Chamberlain had ridden in, bringing with him Lieutenant Taylor of the Engineers, whose skill and resource made him a reinforcement in

1857. himself. Another clever engineer, Baird Smith, had followed a few days later; and on August 7 the British had greeted with delight the majestic figure of General Nicholson, the lion of the Punjaub and the demi-god of the Afghan frontier, who was accompanied by the movable column which, under his fearless leadership, had made itself the terror and the wonder of the land.

The real importance of the arrival of Nicholson's column was that, with the increase of strength which it brought to the British, it would be possible for the force which had hitherto been besieged upon the Ridge to make an assault on Delhi, as soon as the siege train should arrive. The siege train was expected about the end of August, and on the 24th a large body of rebels left the city with eighteen guns to intercept it. The movement became known to the British, and at dawn
Aug. 25. on the following day Nicholson was sent in pursuit. The weather was exceedingly bad, and the roads, which had been turned into quagmires by torrential rains, proved most wearying to the troops; but their ardour for battle supported them through the toil of a long march, and when at length they came up with the enemy at Najafgarh, they rushed the guns in one desperate charge, and scattered the rebels to the winds. The siege train, not again molested by the rebels after this experience, reached Delhi in safety on September 3. The preparations for an assault were then pressed forward, and batteries were constructed from which the heavy guns could open fire upon the city walls. The first was erected speedily and in silence on the night of the 7th, and by the afternoon of the following day
Sept. 8. it had knocked to pieces the Moree Bastion, seven hundred yards distant. That same evening an advanced post of the enemy, known as Ludlow Castle, was seized; another battery was constructed in front
Sept. 11. of it; and the work of ruining the Cashmere Bastion and opening up the main breach was begun. The guns

of two other batteries had likewise been placed in position, and on the night of the 13th two engineer officers, after stealing forward to examine the defences, reported that two practicable breaches had been made. 1857.

A general assault was accordingly ordered for the following day. The army, which at this time consisted of 8,000 men, of whom rather more than 3,000 were British, was divided into five columns. Two of them, the first under Nicholson, were to storm the breaches near the Cashmere and the Water Bastions; another was to assault the Cashmere Gate; the fourth was to create a diversion by attacking the suburbs; and the last was to be held in reserve. As morning approached, Sept. 14. the 6,500 men who composed the attacking columns marched off, "terrible in their strength, their discipline, and the passions awakened in their hearts," to take vengeance on the 30,000 murderers and mutineers behind the Delhi walls, and upon the wicked city that had harboured them and shared in their crimes. A fierce artillery duel rent the air, as the sun mounted slowly into heaven; then at a signal from Nicholson the attacking columns moved forward to their task. That which was directed against the suburbs encountered an unexpectedly vigorous resistance from a large body of rebels: the gallant commander of the Ghurkas, Major Reid, fell wounded in the head, the men wavered and retired, and for a time there was a grave danger of the enemy following up their success so as to turn the flank of the other storming parties. Hope Grant, at the head of the cavalry brigade, had seen the retrograde movement, however, and he now came galloping up to support the infantry. Owing to the nature of the ground he could not charge, and a furious fire was opened on him by the guns on the walls and by thousands of muskets in the suburb near at hand; but his men knew how much depended on their conduct, and for two hours they stood their ground unflinching "under as heavy a fire of round shot, grape, and

1857. canister" as even the Salamanders of Hodson's Horse had ever drawn inspiration from in the hour of battle.

The other columns met with better success. The force detached to storm the Cashmere Gate was hotly received as it struggled across the ruined remains of the drawbridge towards the gates; but it contrived to blow up the gates and to force an entrance into the city. Each of the other columns had been met by a terrible fire as it advanced against the breaches, and many officers and men had fallen, especially in Nicholson's column, which had found the ditch almost impassable; but Nicholson himself had led his men across, and both the breaches had at length been carried. Once within the walls, the columns succeeded rapidly in clearing the ramparts to right and left; but the final occupation of the great city, with its palace-fortress, its narrow, tortuous streets, and its fortified magazine, was a task which required time. On the 16th the magazine was stormed, and the enemy evacuated the suburbs. On the evening of the 19th another bastion was taken, and on the following day the Lahore Gate and the Royal Palace fell into British hands. On the 21st the Emperor was captured, and with him his sons, who were shot on the spot where four months before they had encouraged the Meerut mutineers to murder the Christian women and children who had been taken when Delhi was lost. So ended the great siege, and with it the strain and stress of those twelve terrible weeks. The little army which had held the Ridge, and captured the city, had suffered grievously in its unending combats. In one day alone, the day when the walls were stormed, sixty-six officers and over eleven hundred men had fallen; and near the spot where he had led his men to victory the fearless Nicholson lay calm in death.

The story of the Mutiny in other parts of Bengal must now be told. The tidings of the Meerut outbreak and of the loss of Delhi spread like wild-fire through

Northern India, and by May 14 they had reached Cawnpore. The situation of that city on the banks of the Ganges marked it out as the trade emporium of the fertile plains of the North-West, and it had long been an important military station of the Company; but in the spring of 1857 it contained only a handful of European soldiers, under the command of an aged General, Sir Hugh Wheeler. Wheeler was a gallant and distinguished officer, but he was unfitted for his position by an overweening confidence in the native troops whom he had led throughout fifty years of vigorous service under the Company's flag, and he proceeded to commit the fatal error of under-estimating the danger both to British India in general and to his own command in particular, expecting to preserve the loyalty of his native regiments by refraining from any action which might imply that his confidence in them was impaired. The Sepoys, however, were utterly unworthy of the generous trust reposed in them, and on June 5 Wheeler's native regiments threw off their allegiance, compelling their General, with 800 men, women, and children, of whom 300 only were combatants, to take refuge within the feeble British lines. 1857.

It had been the intention of the Cawnpore mutineers to join the main rebel force at Delhi, but they were diverted from this purpose by a crafty Oriental princelet who lived at the neighbouring town of Bithoor, and to whom they offered the leadership of their forces. Teerek Dhundu Punt, the Nana of Bithoor, was the adopted son of the last Mahratta Peishwa, and had inherited from his protector a liberal fortune and a profound dislike of the British nation. In the cataclysm of the Mutiny he saw an opportunity for gratifying both his hatred and his ambition, and he set to work with native astuteness to twist events to his own advantage. Approaching Wheeler with hypocritical professions of friendship, and of admiration for the British, he obtained permission to place the treasury at Cawn-

1857. pore under the protection of his own body-guard. This done, he accepted with alacrity the invitation of the rebels to assume the direction of their forces, but he had no intention of going to Delhi to become a mere satellite at the Moghul court, and by subtle harangues and ample largesses he set himself to convince the mutineers that they could not start for Delhi so long as a single European drew breath in Cawnpore. His arguments prevailed, and on the morning of the 6th the rebel forces reappeared in Cawnpore, to commence the work of burning and slaughter.

For the little band in the British lines the return of the rebels was a grievous misfortune. The rabble of the city could easily have been held in check until help came, but the feeble garrison could scarcely hope to contend successfully with an organised military force. The enemy opened their bombardment on June 7, and from that day onwards their fire grew rapidly in volume, as new batteries were completed and fresh cannon mounted. On June 12 a barrack with a thatched roof was set on fire by red-hot shot, and most of its inmates, consisting of women, children, and wounded soldiers, perished in the conflagration, together with all the medical stores and surgical instruments. A singularly gallant sortie under Captain Moore on the 15th atoned in a measure for this disaster, but the enemy was heavily reinforced on the following day, and the crumbling defences were fast ceasing to be tenable. The losses of the little garrison had been terribly severe; thirst and famine accentuated the miseries of the siege; and in General Wheeler's words to Lawrence, "British spirit alone remains, but it cannot last for ever." On the 25th, when the supplies of flour and horseflesh on which the garrison depended were almost exhausted, a message was sent in by the Nana, offering a safe passage to Allahabad to all who laid down their arms; and in view of the hopelessness of further resistance, Wheeler, not without misgiving, decided to accept the terms.

One day was allowed for preparations, and early in the morning of Saturday the 27th the carriages and escort arrived, to conduct the British to their boats. The procession had not gone far when five Sepoys, who had remained true to the British, were seized by the rebels and slain. Another murder was committed by seven or eight men of the 1st Native Infantry, who discovered their former commander, Colonel Ewart, severely wounded, in a litter, and cut him to pieces, along with his wife, who was walking by his side. In the meantime the head of the procession had reached the spot where the boats were lying, and the difficult work of embarkation was begun. It was not till nine o'clock that the last boat was ready, and Major Vibart gave the word to be off. As the command crossed his lips, a bugle note was sounded near by, the crews leaped overboard and made for the shore, and from every side there burst upon the unhappy occupants of the boats a murderous deluge of bullets, round shot, and grape. Desperate efforts were made to push off from the shore, but only three of the boats could be moved. The rest quickly took fire; the sick and wounded perished in the flames; of those who jumped overboard many were drowned, and many more were struck down by bullets and shot, or were sabred by the Nana's ruffians. Of the three boats which got away, two drifted on to the further shore, where a detachment of rebels captured and slew their occupants. In the meantime the third boat had dropped slowly down the sluggish stream, hotly pursued by the mutineers. There were no oars on board; the rudder had been shot away; and hunger and the scorching heat of the sun added their miseries to the perils of the incessant fusillade. For want of steering the boat struck repeatedly on sand-banks, and many lives were lost in every attempt to refloat it. During the night the enemy's fire gradually slackened, and in the morning nothing of them could be seen. But the progress of the boat was terribly slow: it 1857.

1857. had only made nine miles since the previous morning. About two o'clock that afternoon a sharp fire was opened on it by a band of men who came out of a neighbouring village as it approached; and towards evening a party of sixty mutineers, who had been sent by water to overtake it, had to be met and repelled. During the night a hurricane arose, and with the morrow's dawn the luckless occupants of the boat found themselves hard aground in a back-water. Here they were presently discovered by their pursuers, and by the orders of Major Vibart thirteen men waded ashore to hold the enemy in check, while the boat was refloated. The thirteen men drove the rebels back, but when they returned, the boat had disappeared. There was then nothing for them to do but to retreat, fighting, down the river bank. After fighting their way for about three miles, they saw a temple in front of them and fled into it for shelter. Here they enjoyed an interval of safety, but they presently discovered that the enemy were preparing to pile gunpowder round the building and blow it to fragments about their ears. Seizing their chance, they dashed suddenly out of the temple and charged straight at the mutineers, bayonets in hand. Seven of them got through and hurled themselves into the Ganges, where a storm of bullets was directed upon them. Two were shot as they swam; one put to shore exhausted and was murdered as he touched the bank. The others swam on, eluded their pursuers, were spared by the not less dangerous alligators which infested the river, and eventually, naked, sun-scorched, faint with hunger, exposure, and fatigue, were picked out of the river by some friendly natives, and carried to the nearest British post.

These four men, Captain Thomson, Lieutenant Delafosse, and Privates Sullivan and Murphy, were the sole survivors of the Cawnpore garrison. Their companions in the boat—some eighty men, women, and children—
June 30. had been captured and sent back to Cawnpore, where

by the Nana's command they were brutally murdered. 1857.
Five men and two hundred women and children had also been taken when the boats were burnt on the 27th: they were confined for a fortnight in a long, low, ill-ventilated building; then on July 15 the men were shot by the Sepoys, and the women and children were hacked to pieces by some ruffians in the Nana's service. Two days afterwards the gallant little army, which under General Havelock had been struggling doggedly onwards to relieve Cawnpore, marched victorious but baffled into the British lines; and the tragedy recorded in those crumbling walls and blood-stained floors sent a chill to every heart, because still further ahead, in the capital of Oude, another British garrison was threatened with a similar doom.

A short time before the outbreak of the Mutiny the city of Lucknow had been placed under the care of Sir Henry Lawrence, who had covered himself with distinction in the field of Indian politics and administration by the services which he had rendered in the Punjaub and in Oude, and who in the Burmese, Afghan, and Sikh campaigns had gained considerable experience of Asiatic warfare. At Lucknow he had had early opportunities of gauging the seriousness of the discontent amongst the Sepoys, and he had come swiftly to the conclusion that the Sepoy, if his grievances were not speedily redressed, would redress them himself. In a measure he sympathised with these grievances, but he was well aware that there was only one way of dealing with Sepoy mutinies; and under his orders one of the regiments at Lucknow, which refused May 4.
to use the cartridges served out to it, was instantly and most rigorously punished. A few days later came the news of the Meerut outbreak and the loss of Delhi, bringing to the mind of Lawrence the conviction that "we should have to strike anew for our Indian Empire"; and he set to work forthwith to strengthen an ancient fortress, known as the Muchee Bhawun, which would

1857. serve to overawe the city, and to fortify the Residency, where he intended to take his stand, should the mutineers bring a regular army against him. The month of May wore on amid a succession of harassing alarms; and at length, on the evening of the 30th, the greater part of the Sepoys at Lucknow revolted suddenly, murdered their officers, and retreated from the town, pursued by Lawrence and his small British force. The tidings that then came in from the neighbouring districts showed that the fortification of the Residency had been no unnecessary precaution. A few days after the Lucknow outbreak Lawrence learnt that a small force which had been sent out to patrol the surrounding country had mutinied on the road. There followed in rapid succession the news of one disaster after another, the troops at eight important stations in Oude revolting in the course of the next ten days, and in many instances murdering ruthlessly all the Europeans who fell into their hands. Finally, on June 28, came tidings that Cawnpore had fallen, and that the scattered rebel bands were uniting to march on Lucknow.

The position of Lawrence was now critical enough, but a grievous misfortune soon made it more critical than ever. Lawrence could not forget how much had been accomplished by British pluck in India, and the recollection appealed with double force to a man of his dauntless resolution and iron nerve. He therefore determined upon the bold plan of marching out with his small force, to meet the approaching rebel army, and by defeating it in the open, to deliver Lucknow from the miseries of a prolonged and doubtful siege.

June. Accordingly at daybreak on the 30th the British marched out of Lucknow in the direction of Chinhut, where the advance-guard of the mutineer army had taken up its position. Unhappily for Lawrence, misfortune dogged his footsteps throughout the day. The roads over which he moved proved to be loose and heavy; his men grew faint with heat and toil, and

with want of water and of food; the enemy turned out to be at least three times as numerous as he had believed; some of his native troops behaved indifferently; and at the end of an arduous day of marching and fighting the British force limped back to the Residency, bereft of over 300 men, and hotly pursued by the triumphant mutineers. 1857.

The siege of the Residency then began, and owing to the unfortunate issue of the affair at Chinhut there had been no time to call in the garrison of the Muchee Bhawun fortress. Some attempt was made to communicate with them by messengers, but it was unlikely that any runner could live to cross the zone of fire, and three officers volunteered to transmit the necessary orders by means of an antiquated semaphore which stood in an exposed position on the Residency roof. As soon as they showed themselves, a hot fire was opened on them from the neighbouring houses occupied by the mutineers, and in this fire they had to labour for three hours before the machine could be got into working order. At last, however, the semaphore stood erect, the pulleys moved, and the men on the look-out in the Muchee Bhawun deciphered the message: "Spike the guns well, blow up the Fort, and retire at midnight." The officer commanding the fortress made his plans, and when the hour struck, the advance-guard moved silently and swiftly out of the Muchee Bhawun, crossed the intervening space undetected by the enemy, and, reaching one of the gates of the Residency, shouted to those within to open it. The gunners stationed at the gate mistook the cry for an order to open with grape, and hurriedly made ready to discharge their pieces over the ground where their comrades were standing. Some one happily discovered the mistake, the gates were opened, and the men without marched safely through, presently followed by the rest of the detachment with their guns and treasure. A moment later, and with a terrific report, the Muchee Bhawun blew up. It still

July 1.

July 1.

1857. contained one soldier who had been too drunk to march out with the rest, and who was now hurled into the air by the explosion, but was neither hurt nor disturbed thereby. The next morning he awoke to find himself amid a heap of ruins untenanted save by a pair of bullocks, which, like himself, had by some miracle escaped unhurt; and with these in tow, he strolled quietly across to the Residency, not a whit the worse for his adventure.

The Residency entrenchments, which Lawrence's men had now to defend, covered an area of about sixty acres; the fortifications were inadequate, and the garrison consisted of no more than 1,720 men, of whom 150 were civilians and over 700 natives. A terrible blow fell upon the little force before the day was over, a shell
July 2. bursting in the room where Lawrence was snatching a moment's rest, and inflicting a mortal wound. When
July 4. the news of Lawrence's death became known to the enemy, they redoubled their efforts. They had brought some twenty-five heavy guns to play on the entrenchments, and had placed, and protected, their batteries so skilfully that some of them, although no more than fifty yards away, could not be reached by the British either with guns or with rifles. The outposts began to crumble rapidly into ruins; exposure meant almost certain death; the stench of dead animals filled the air; and every night in the Residency churchyard the chaplain stood in a storm of shot to commit to the earth the gallant soldiers who daily fell in the perilous labours of the defence.

Some not inconsiderable successes afforded welcome relief from the anxieties and dangers of the siege. On July 7 seventy men crept out from their lines and blew up an advanced post of the enemy, from which a band of unerring marksmen had maintained a peculiarly
July 9. galling fire. Two days later a handful of privates made a sortie on their own account, spiked a gun, and killed many of the besiegers. On the 20th a furious and

sustained assault by the enemy was repulsed, many 1857.
hundreds of the assailants being slain; and the joy of the garrison was increased tenfold when on the following night a messenger crept through the enemy's lines, and brought word to the Residency that Havelock had defeated the Nana in three great battles and that help was at hand. But men's hearts began to grow heavy with the sickness of hope deferred as July passed and August came, and still the expected succour did not arrive: and the garrison passed by a rapid transition from confidence to despair. The outlook had in truth become gloomy in the extreme. The fire of the besiegers grew daily more galling; small-pox and cholera lay in wait for those whom the bullets of the enemy spared; the dead bodies of men and horses, which the living could no longer bury, polluted the air; the atmosphere in the hospital grew so foul that the women who had ceaselessly ministered there could no longer be admitted; and flies and vermin gathered in thousands to their harvest amid the dead and the sick. Moreover, the enemy had contrived a new and harassing method of attack: after the failure of their first great assault, they had set to work to mine the British posts. Providentially the garrison contained a few Cornishmen who were perhaps the only soldiers in the British Army qualified to deal with the emergency; and under the guidance of a captain named Fulton these men devoted their energies to listening for, and guarding against, subterranean attack. For the most part the besiegers were baffled by the skill and pertinacity of Fulton and his helpers, but on August 10 a portion of the defences was blown up, and a furious assault was delivered, which was only repelled after several hours of doubtful combat.

So in ceaseless toil and peril August passed and September came, and men anxiously asked themselves how much longer the defence could be maintained. Would the Cawnpore tragedy be repeated at Lucknow?

1857 It seemed inevitable, for death stalked through the Residency, and famine was drawing daily nearer. On August 16 General Inglis, upon whom the command had devolved, despatched his faithful messenger, Ungud, to report to Havelock the critical condition to which his force was reduced: his strength, he said, was now 350 Europeans and 300 natives; his defences were growing daily weaker, the enemy daily more active and adventurous; putting the men on half rations, the food might last for another month; but if Lucknow was to be saved, there was not much time to lose. More than a month passed after this appeal and still no definite tidings of the relieving force could be gained. On Sunday, September 20, when the survivors of the little garrison were reduced to the last extremity, they assembled according to their custom for Divine worship in one of the half-ruined buildings in the Residency lines; and in the words of the Psalms appointed for the day they appealed to the God of Battles to hide not His face from them in the time of trouble, but to hear right soon and deliver the children appointed unto death. An answer to their prayer was quickly vouchsafed. That same day, at no great distance from Lucknow, General Outram was writing to Inglis: "The army crossed the river yesterday . . . marches towards you to-morrow, and with the blessing of God will now relieve you." Late at night on the 22nd Ungud crept into the Residency with the welcome tidings, and on the morrow the sound of distant firing could be heard in the direction of Cawnpore. For two long and anxious days the distant firing continued; and then at last, on the 25th, the faint sound deepened into the roar of approaching guns, and soon after midday the advance-guard of Havelock's army was descried fighting its way through the Lucknow streets. The Residency was relieved.

"Through the archway of the Bailey Guard Gate streamed Havelock's force. Men, and women with

their children, were there to welcome them. The big, rough-bearded soldiers seized 'the little children out of our arms, kissing them with tears rolling down their cheeks, and thanking God they had come in time to save them from the fate of Cawnpore. . . . Every one's tongue seemed going at once with so much to ask and tell, and the faces of utter strangers beamed upon each other like those of dearest friends and brothers.'"[1] 1857.

Havelock's men had endured perils and toils not less great than those which the Residency Garrison had undergone. They had set out from Allahabad on July 7—a slender column of less than 2,000 men—to march, in pouring rain or scorching heat, "through a hostile country, held by a host of well-disciplined soldiers." The mutineers turned out in force to check their advance, and the Nana himself brought an army of 10,000 men to oppose them; but thanks to their indomitable resolution and to the skill of their General they contrived in the first nine days to cover the 126 miles which separated them from Cawnpore, and to crown their arms with victory in four pitched battles. By the time they reached Cawnpore, two days after July 17. the murder of the women and children, their numbers were reduced to less than 1,000 fighting men; yet in their stubborn resolve to relieve Lucknow they pressed forward on their desperate adventure, and in the course of the next four weeks added five more victories to their former triumphs. But the task which they were attempting was beyond their strength, and after his ninth victory Havelock was compelled to adopt "the painful resolution imposed on him by circumstances beyond his control," of halting to await reinforcements. These were already on the way, under Sir James Outram, and on September 15 they joined Havelock at Cawnpore. As an officer of tried ability and courage Outram was welcome to Havelock, though

[1] Forrest, "Indian Mutiny," vol. i. p. 330.

1857. the latter grieved to hear that Outram, by the terms of his appointment, was to supersede him in the command. But he had not reckoned with Outram himself, who with noble self-abnegation waived his rank in favour of the officer who had already accomplished so much, and placed himself as a volunteer under the orders of his subordinate. Thus it was under their old commander that the gallant band had at last forced their way over three more battle-fields, and through the Lucknow streets, into the beleaguered Residency.

Havelock had joined hands with Inglis, but the operation which he had accomplished was rather a reinforcement than a relief. A host of 60,000 enemies still occupied the city and the surrounding districts; the slender British column had only with difficulty and heavy loss cut its way through Lucknow, when unencumbered; and to attempt the perilous passage again with women and children, and sick and wounded men, would have been to court disaster. Havelock and Outram therefore decided to hold for a while longer the long-held position, satisfied that relief would be sent to them in ample time by the new Commander-in-Chief of the forces in India. Sir Colin Campbell had landed at Calcutta on August 13, bringing to his new and anxious task a high reputation gained in fifty years of active service in all quarters of the globe, a resolute mind, dauntless courage, and a vigorous intelligence. Infusing his own energy into all around him, he at once pressed on with the preparations so as to be able to take the field without delay; and leaving Calcutta in October, on November 3 he arrived at Cawnpore. The position in which he then found himself was far from easy. His forces consisted of about 5,000 men with a diminutive siege train; Oude swarmed with rebels; and to his left the highly-trained troops of the Gwalior Contingent, double his strength, were lying in wait to harass his flank or to

cut him off in rear. He was too good a soldier to under-estimate for a minute the enormous risk which an advance on Lucknow involved; but it seemed to him, on reviewing the position, that such an advance was urgently demanded, however perilous it might be. Leaving 1,000 men under Windham to hold Cawnpore against the Gwalior Contingent, he therefore moved forward on Lucknow with the main force, hoping by a swift advance to extricate Outram before Windham should be attacked. His design was to swing round upon the open ground to the right of the city, so as to avoid the tortuous streets in which Havelock's force had suffered so severely, and Outram had already sent him a plan of the proposed route; but when he reached the Alum Bagh on the 12th, a surer guide came unexpectedly to his aid. Thomas Henry Kavanagh, a brave and stalwart Irishman of the Indian Civil Service, intimately acquainted with Lucknow, had gone to Outram in the Residency, and had volunteered to steal across to the Alum Bagh and guide Colin Campbell in. Outram admitted that the service would be invaluable, but he considered the mission to be of so perilous a nature that he hesitated to sanction the attempt. Kavanagh was not to be gainsaid, however, and that night with blackened skin and in native dress he set out from the Residency, accompanied by a native spy who was returning to the Alum Bagh. The couple had first to cross the Goomtee, and Kavanagh's spirits sank, as he peered into the chill gloom of the silent river, thinking of the countless dangers which lay beyond and of the horrible fate which awaited him, if captured by the rebels. But the spy had already plunged into the stream, and Kavanagh, summoning up his resolution, slipped down the bank and followed him. Having put on their clothes on the further bank, they then made their way towards the main street of the city. A native officer presently challenged them, but they told him they were returning to their homes in the city, and he let them go on

1857.

1857. Threading their way without misadventure through the crowded streets, they lost their path in the open country beyond, and blundered upon a Sepoy guard, which turned out and scrutinised them narrowly. The spy lost his head, but Kavanagh contrived to persuade the Sepoys that he and his companion were poor wayfarers journeying to their homes. Soon after quitting the Sepoys, the couple strayed into a swamp, and on struggling out on the further side, Kavanagh was so exhausted that he insisted on lying down in a neighbouring mango grove to snatch an hour's rest. Scarcely had he done so when footsteps approached, and he heard with delight the challenge of a British sentry, who led him, a strange figure in the dawning light, to the tent of the Commander-in-Chief. The Victoria Cross was conferred on Kavanagh; he was the first civilian who had ever won it. No soldier before or since could show a clearer title to that token of exalted courage.

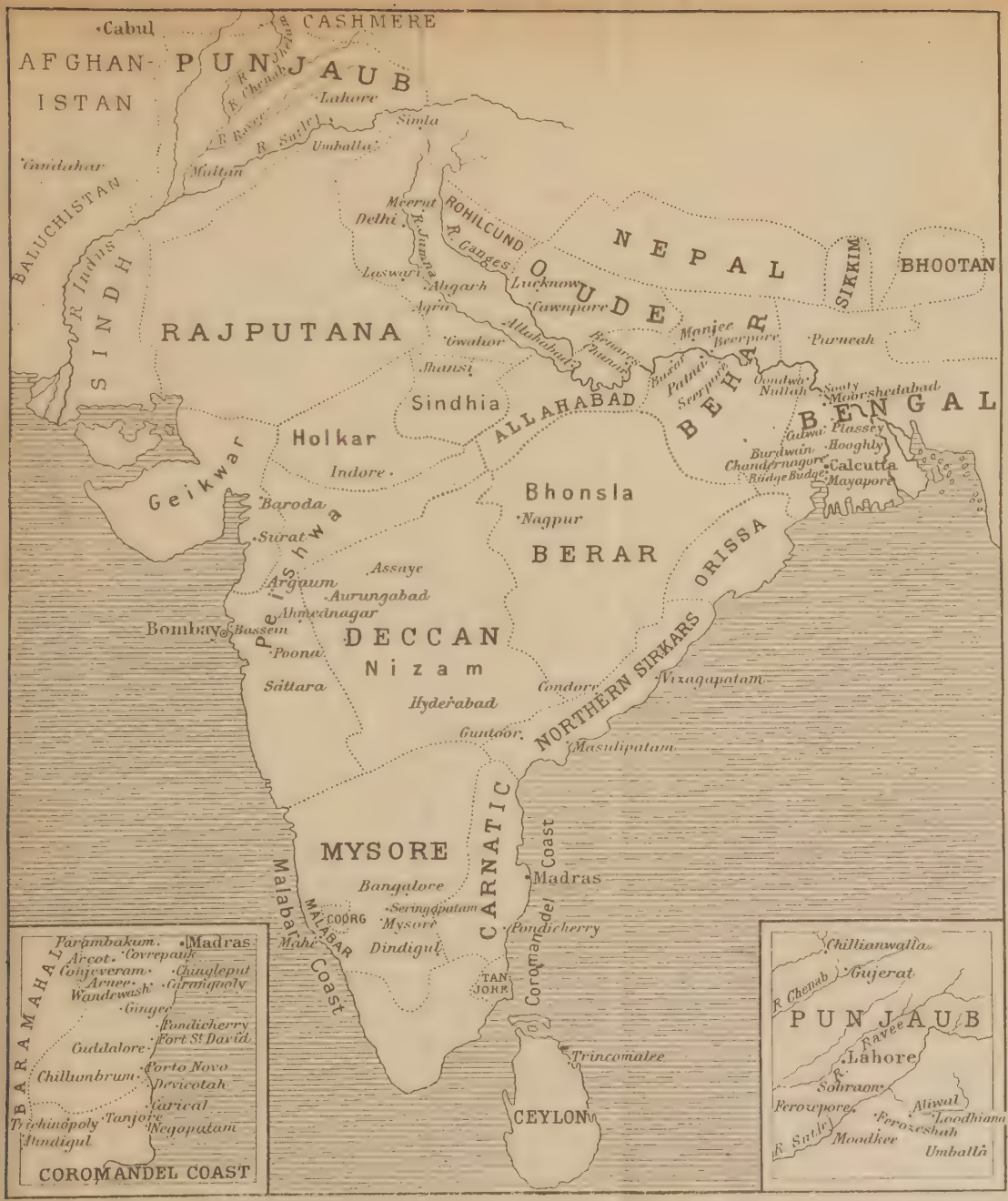
With Kavanagh to lead him, Campbell renewed his advance. Two formidable obstacles beset the path which he proposed to follow, one of them an ancient walled garden, known as the Secunder Bagh, the other a massive Mosque called the Shah Nujjeef: both had been fortified and were strongly held by the enemy. Close upon 3,000 Sepoys were in the Secunder Bagh, and a galling fire was directed against the British guns as they attempted to breach the walls; but a small breach was presently made, through which the Sikhs and Highlanders charged, and at the close of a brief but desperate struggle not a Sepoy was left alive within the walls. The Shah Nujjeef was like to give greater trouble, for Peel and his naval guns could make no impression on the massive masonry, though they unlimbered within a few yards of the walls in a veritable tempest of shot. The position was critical, and Campbell was about to hurl the Highlanders against the walls when a Scotch sergeant, Paton, announced that

he had discovered an opening on the further side of the enclosure. A detachment was immediately sent off to seize it, and the Sepoys, detecting the movement, hastily abandoned the position. That night Outram and Havelock got into touch with Campbell, and a few days later the garrison of the Residency was withdrawn in safety from the battered defences they had held so long. But "in the hour of their success there fell on the soldiers a deep sorrow": Havelock had been seized by a mortal illness, and on the morning of the 24th his noble spirit passed away. The soldiers whom he had so often led to victory carried him to burial; and a simple cross carved by the hand of Outram marked the resting-place of "one of the bravest soldiers that ever fought for the honour and flag of England." 1857. Nov.

A terrible anxiety was still in store for Colin Campbell. Tantia Toppee, the one capable general who appeared in the ranks of the mutineers, was in command of the Gwalior army, and hearing of the British advance to Lucknow, he determined to make a spring upon Windham's feeble force at Cawnpore and seize the bridge of boats by which alone Campbell could retreat. Campbell well knew the danger, and it was with consternation that he heard the sound of distant cannon as he began his retreat from the Alum Bagh. "If the bridge of boats should be captured, he would be cut off in Oudh with 50,000 enemies in his rear, a well-equipped army of 40,000 men, with a powerful train of artillery, numbering over forty siege guns, in his front, and with all the women and children, sick and wounded to guard." Not a moment was to be lost, and yet another mighty effort was demanded of the weary troops who had been marching and fighting for eighteen nights and days without once changing their clothes. But they were not men to shrink from exertion, and the booming of the distant guns was music to make them march the quicker. They reached Cawnpore not a minute too soon: Windham had been

driven back into his entrenchments, sore beset; the precious bridge was in hourly peril of capture or destruction; and nothing could have saved it but the splendid speed of Colin Campbell's troops.

The flowing tide of rebellion which had threatened to sweep away the entire fabric of British rule in India, had now been checked, and it was about to be rolled completely back by Colin Campbell's defeat of Tantia Topee in the battle of Cawnpore, and by his siege and capture of Lucknow, successes won at so small a cost as greatly to enhance the honour due to the leader who achieved them. But the real heroes of the Mutiny are to be found, not in the great army which gave the death-blow to the revolt, but amongst the men who withstood the first shocks of that sudden and awful outbreak, who kept the flag flying on the Ridge at Delhi, who held the Residency at Lucknow, who fought their way with the noble Havelock through a barrier of sixty thousand foes. It was they who preserved the Empire of the British, rescuing India from the horrors which would have attended its fall. But for them the land would once again have become the battle-ground of contending races and the spoil of the strong; the murderer and the thief would once again have flourished in the noonday; and, as in the days of old, the peasant would have "fled with his wife and children to the mountains or the jungles, to the milder neighbourhood of the hyæna and the tiger." The India of the British would have shrivelled, under the ancient blight of fire and sword, into the India of the Moghuls.


Cabul
CASHMERE
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Multan
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Meerut
Delhi
R. Jumna
ROHILCUND
R. Ganges
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHOOTAN
Lucknow
Cawnpore
OUDE
Laswari
Aligarh
Agra
Allahabad
Benares
Chunar
Manjee
Beerpore
Purneah
RAJPUTANA
Gwalior
Jhansi
Sindhia
Buxar
Patna
Serrpore
Oondwa
Nullah
Moorshedabad
BEHAR
BENGAL
ALLAHABAD
Holkar
Geikwar
Indore
Baroda
Surat
Pilajhwa
Bhonsla
Nagpur
BERAR
Gulwa
Plassey
Burdwan
Hooghly
Chandernagore
Calcutta
Budge Budge
Mayapore
ORISSA
Assaye
Argaum
Aurungabad
Ahmednagar
Bombay
Bassein
Poona
DECCAN
Nizam
Sattara
Hyderabad
Condore
Vizagapatam
NORTHERN SIRKARS
Guntoor
Masulipatam
MYSORE
Bangalore
Seringapatam
Mysore
COORG
Malabar Coast
CARNATIC
Coromandel Coast
Madras
Pondicherry
Dindigul
TAN-
JORE
Trincomalee
CEYLON
BARAMAHAL
Parambakum
Madras
Arcot
Covrepauk
Conjeveram
Chingleput
Arnee
Wandewash
Caramgoly
Ginger
Pondicherry
Cuddalore
Fort St. David
Chillumbrum
Porto Novo
Devicotah
Carical
Tanjore
Trichinopoly
Negapatam
Tindigul
COROMANDEL COAST
Chillianwalla
Gujerat
R. Chenab
PUNJAUB
Ravee
Lahore
R. Sobraon
Ferozepore
Aliwal
Loodhiana
Ferozeshah
R. Sutlej
Moodkee
Umballa

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CHAPTER XII

EGYPT AND SOUTH AFRICA

England in Africa—Egypt—Cape Colony: the Boers—The Transvaal and the Orange Free State—The Transvaal under British rule—The rebellion of 1881—Paul Kruger—Boer plans: the outbreak of war—Lord Methuen's advance—Magersfontein—The position in Natal—Colenso—Lords Roberts and Kitchener reach Cape Town: the situation—Lord Roberts's advance—Klip Drift—Waterval Drift—Cronje's retreat—Paardeberg—Surrender of Cronje—Driefontein—Results of Lord Roberts's operations—End of the war—Conclusion.

The soil of the African continent was first pressed by the foot of the invading white man in the early days of the expansion of the European nations, but for many years African colonial stations were valued only as hunting-grounds for slaves or as stepping-stones to more valuable possessions. When the nineteenth century was well advanced, however, the great continent, till then neglected, began to attract the attention of European Imperialists; and it has fallen to the lot of Great Britain to secure within it two great additions to her Empire. These are Egypt and her dominions in the South. Strictly speaking, it is true, Egypt forms no part of the Empire proper; Britain in Egypt is technically not a freeholder but a tenant: but it would be an affectation to deny that her tenure has become invested with the characteristics of a leasehold in perpetuity.

As a station on the road to India Egypt had for many years attracted the anxious attention of England, but its importance was enormously enhanced by the construction of the Suez Canal in 1868. Nearly one-

half of the shares in that great undertaking were originally allotted to the Egyptian prince, Khedive Ismail; but Ismail being an unwise and extravagant ruler, was presently reduced to the verge of bankruptcy, and found himself obliged to exchange his shares for cash. The matter came to the ears of the English Premier, Disraeli, who seized the occasion thus fortuitously presented, and telegraphed to Ismail an offer of £4,000,000 for his interest in the Canal, which Ismail accepted. The subsequent appreciation in the value of the shares has proved the transaction to have been prudent, viewed merely as an investment; but of far greater importance than any money gain was the authority which it conferred upon England, not only in the conduct of the great Canal enterprise, but in the affairs of Egypt itself. In 1879, upon the abdication of the old Khedive, England was called upon to join with France in establishing a control over his suc-
1882. cessor, Tewfik; and three years later, when one of Tewfik's ministers, Arabi, attempted to throw off the foreign yoke, it fell to our lot to put down the disturbance. The task was thrust upon us in order that our partners might profit by the embarrassment in which it was expected to involve us, but the event falsified all such treacherous hopes. The forts around Alexandria, which Arabi had occupied, were bombarded
June 11, 1882. by a British squadron; and Sir Garnet Wolseley, pressing across the desert, carried the lines of Tel-el-Kebir
Sept. 13, 1882. by a night surprise, dispersed the rebel forces, and reoccupied the capital. The rebellion then collapsed, and it left England supreme in Egypt. The position entailed some anxieties, but it was rich in opportunities. England has experienced anxieties on the score of the Soudan; she has devoted money and valuable lives to the pacification of its wild and warlike tribes; and she has undergone the shame and sorrow of the
Jan. 1885. desertion and death of Gordon at Khartoum. But she has found amends in the opportunities in which her

position has abounded. As a contribution to human prosperity and happiness, the rule of England in Egypt is eclipsed only by the yet greater task which she has accomplished in her administration of India.

The history of the British Empire at the other extremity of the continent[1] has been longer and more varied. Cape Colony was formally acquired by Great Britain in 1815, after being twice captured by her during the Napoleonic wars. Cape Town had originally been occupied by the Dutch as a port of call on the way to the East, and as such it was a valuable acquisition to its new owners; but in 1815, and for long afterwards, the rest of the Colony was regarded by the British as a burdensome appendage to the port. England found herself in the position of a man who inherits a convenient country house together with large but unprofitable estates; and her attitude was not likely to be favourably affected by a closer acquaintance with the Boers, or farmers, by whom the interior was peopled. In the course of a roving life in the wilds of a vast, ungoverned region, the Boer had relapsed into a state of semi-barbarism in which he had acquired an intense love of personal independence that made any kind of government distasteful to him; and the sole relic of his ancestral traditions was a savage scorn for the native which made him peculiarly obnoxious to his new governors. The Boers were admittedly guilty of habitual cruelty and treachery to their black servants and to their black neighbours; but much may be forgiven to men who were accustomed to see their lands periodically devastated by the wanton raids of merciless savage tribes, and the Boer might easily have been reformed, if the British Government had shielded him from unprovoked native attacks. Far from protecting him, however, the British Government filled his cup of misery to the brim by taking

[1] A map of South Africa will be found facing p. 322.

upon itself the office of black man's champion. For some years the high-spirited Boers submitted patiently to injustice and persecution; but at length the painful necessity was forced upon them of quitting the fruitful land of their birth, to escape from the sorrows and vexations which had come upon it. In the unknown land to which they were going, manifold perils might indeed await them; but at least the British flag would not fly there, nor the British official hold sway.

1836–1837. Such was the origin of the Great Trek, which gave to the Orange River and Transvaal lands their first Dutch inhabitants. Unhappily for the trekkers the bold experiment met with no great success: native enemies menaced them from without, and bankruptcy and anarchy wrought havoc within. In 1843 Natal, to which some of the trekkers had gone, was proclaimed a British Colony, and five years later the Orange River country was placed under British sovereignty. These measures had scarcely been carried out when the policy of which they were the fruits was abandoned: the independence of the Transvaal was recognised by the Sand River Convention of 1852, and two years later, by the Convention of Bloemfontein, the lately-hoisted British flag was hauled down beyond the Orange River, to make room for the Orange Free State. The melancholy truth was that the England of that day, tight in the grip of the dead hand of Little Englandism, was intent only upon shirking Imperial responsibilities and expense; and she hoped to accomplish her ends by leaving the Dutch trekkers to their own devices. The policy was, however, impossible, and after twenty years of anxiety and hesitation it had once more to be reversed. In 1877 the annexation of the Transvaal was proclaimed in Pretoria amid the rejoicings of the people.

Forty years of anarchy and warfare had slaked the Boer thirst for independence, and a Dutch traveller reported that the annexation was welcomed by at least

ninety-six per cent. of the population: the Transvaal, he thought, with a little tact and fair dealing on the part of the British Government, might now be turned into an enthusiastically loyal Colony. Unhappily, neither the tact nor the fair dealing were forthcoming. Blunder after blunder was committed; the representative institutions which had been promised were withheld; and the old animosity against the British not unnaturally revived. The very services which the British had rendered turned to their disadvantage, for the chief inducements to union had been removed by the suppression of the formidable Zulus, by the growing prosperity of the country, and by its rising revenue under a firm and effective government. At last, when the stress of the Zulu war had revealed the weakness of the British power in the land, a violent anti-British agitation was set on foot by the former Commandant-General of the abolished Republic, Paul Kruger; and the rebel cause was aided materially by Mr. Gladstone, who, in the excitement of an electioneering campaign, "denounced the annexation as a hideous and treacherous crime." The outbreak of rebellion became merely a question of time.

On December 15, 1880, the leaders deemed that the hour for action had come. The Republic was accordingly proclaimed, and bands of insurgents set to work to destroy by sudden and treacherous attacks the scattered bodies of British troops. The main rebel force, 2,000 strong, entered Natal, and occupied a position at Laing's Nek in which to bar the way to a relieving column known to be advancing under Sir George Colley. Their efforts were completely successful. The force under Colley, after being twice defeated, was at last exterminated on Majuba Hill: whereupon the Gladstone Government ignominiously capitulated. While the honour of Great Britain was being signed away, "the loyalists of Pretoria, followed by some of the native chiefs, took part in a strange funeral ceremony—the

Feb. 27, 1881.

solemn burial of the British flag. On the lid of the coffin was inscribed the prophetic word '*resurgam*.'"[1]

Kruger had good reason to be pleased with his success, but far from satisfying his ambition, the completeness of his triumph enlarged his desires, and from the independence of the Transvaal, once his ultimate goal, he began henceforth to look forward to Boer predominance in South Africa. Up to a point fortune favoured his design: the discovery of rich gold-fields in the Transvaal in 1886, by adding enormously to the revenues of the State, enabled the President to arrange in secret for an extensive importation of arms and ammunition. The gold-fields, however, intensified the racial animosity which already existed by calling to Kruger's dominions a large foreign population, mainly British, who were deprived by Kruger of all political privileges, who were subjected by him to heavy taxation, and who chafed continually against the corruption and inefficiency of his government. It was in concert with these "Uitlanders," and in the hope of forcibly redressing their wrongs, that Dr. Jameson undertook his notorious Raid. Nothing could add to Kruger's hatred of England; but that act of culpable folly went far to alienate from her the sympathies of Dutch South Africa, and to render the Uitlander problem incapable of peaceful settlement. Three years of controversy followed, in the course of which the Uitlander grievances became merged in the wider question of the relations of the Transvaal to the Imperial Government; and in the Bloemfontein Conference of 1899 an attempt was made by Mr. Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, and by Sir Alfred Milner, the High Commissioner, to patch up the quarrel. Kruger, however, did not desire that the quarrel should end unless in a complete acceptance of his impossible demands. He believed that at the last England would shrink from war; but should she embrace that alternative, he did not fear to submit to

Dec. 1895 Jan. 1896.

[1] "The *Times* History of the War in South Africa," vol. i. p. 69.

the arbitrament of the sword. He was secure of the support of his neighbours in the Orange Free State; he could count on the active sympathy of many of the Dutch subjects of the Queen; his plans for the armament of his people were far advanced; and he knew that he could put into the field a whole nation of born soldiers, accustomed by the conditions of their life to exertion and privation, and possessed of all the qualities that make for success in war.

At the end of September, 1899, the Transvaal forces were called out, and on October 9 an Ultimatum was presented to the Imperial Government which was tantamount to a declaration of war. Some doubt existed in the minds of the Boer leaders as to the right course to adopt in the now certain event of hostilities. Military considerations suggested that their whole force should be concentrated upon one point of attack, and it was a matter of indifference to the military leaders whether Cape Colony or Natal were the object selected. To the politicians, however, who had to reckon with the diverse aspirations of the two Allied States, no such indifference was possible. From a political point of view it was desirable to invade Cape Colony, where a triumphant enemy might look for a considerable measure of support from the disloyal sections of the population; but it was also desired to punish Natal for her persistent loyalty to the British cause. It was therefore decided to undertake simultaneously both the suggested plans; and when the time limit fixed by the Ultimatum expired, 18,000 Boers with fourteen guns under Joubert entered Natal, whilst other columns moved off against Cape Colony, Kimberley, and Mafeking. The dispersion of force was imprudent and might not improbably have entailed misfortunes, if the judgment of the British generals had not also been warped by the pressure of political considerations. Sir George White, who had landed at Durban on October 7, had under his command in Natal a force of over 15,000 men, and he had intended to con-

1899.

Oct. 11

1899. centrate them at Ladysmith, so as to deal an effective blow against any column which might enter the Colony. Unhappily, however, he had allowed himself to be persuaded into a partial abandonment of this wise intention; and although the bulk of the force was collected at Ladysmith, several detachments were thrown forward, which were strong enough to make a misfortune serious, but were too weak to serve any military purpose. It was not long before the penalty was exacted. The Dundee detachment contrived to repulse a Boer force which occupied Talana Hill and surprised the British Oct. camp on the 20th, and on the following day a column operating against our communications was decisively defeated by General French at Elandslaagte,—each of these successes showing how much might have been accomplished by an united army, adroitly handled. But in the dispersed state of the forces no local success could materially improve the position. The day after his victory French had to be recalled from Elandslaagte; at the same time the Dundee force was compelled to retire precipitately on Ladysmith; and at the end of Oct. 30. the month White himself, after being severely repulsed in an attack on the main Boer force behind the Modder Spruit, was shut up with his entire army in Ladysmith, which a regard for British *prestige*, and for the huge quantities of supplies collected there, made it imperative to hold.

In consequence of this event, and of the Boer descents on Natal by which it was followed, it became necessary to send on to that Colony most of the troops who might otherwise have been employed in an advance through Cape Colony on the Boer Republics. Public opinion, however, was insistent in its demands that something should be done to check the Boer columns which were besieging Mafeking and Kimberley and threatening Cape Colony itself: and Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen was furnished with a small army, with which he was instructed to operate in the western theatre of

war. The task before him was one of no inconsiderable 1899.
difficulty. To reach Kimberley he must cross "a large plain covered with short grass and low bush, and intersected by deep river beds, which were often dry during the hot season. Long ridges afford positions favourable for defence, which are difficult to turn, and which, owing to the magnificent field of fire in front of them, can be held against a superior force with good probability of success."[1] The country was also barren and dry, impairing the mobility of Methuen's force in face of an exceptionally mobile enemy; no military maps of the district existed; for cavalry the General had to depend on the 9th Lancers and some Colonial horsemen, numbering 900 men in all; and these were unfurnished with any appliances for cutting the countless wire fences with which the country was covered.

Methuen crossed the frontier near Hopetown on November 22. His movements were cautious and skilful, and for a time all went well. A long ridge before him was strongly held by the enemy, but advancing under cover of darkness in the early morning of the 23rd, he attacked vigorously at daylight, and after four hours' fighting succeeded, with little loss to himself, in driving the Boers from their position. Continuing his advance on the morrow, he defeated another Boer detachment at Graspan on the 25th, and three days later he succeeded, despite a hot fire, in forcing the passage of the Modder River, behind which the enemy had taken their stand. He had now lost about a thousand men in battle, and had been constrained to weaken his force still further in order to guard his lines of communication against roving parties of the enemy; and as he learnt by heliogram from Kimberley that the garrison there was in no immediate danger, he determined to hold his hand till reinforcements should

[1] "German Official History of the War in South Africa" (Eng. Trans.), vol. i. p. 79. As compared with their European order the seasons are reversed in South Africa, and the hot season had set in.

1899. come. The decision would seem to have been ill-advised. The enemy had been severely shaken by their defeats; the Free State troops were beginning to slink away to their homes; and the leaders were dejected and divided. Cronje was firmly persuaded that it was no longer possible to bar the way to the advancing British army, and the whole Boer force had actually fallen back on their depôt at Jacobsdaal when Methuen's delay enabled Steyn and De la Rey to infuse fresh spirit into their men and persuade them to make one more effort to obstruct the advance.

Dec. 4. The position eventually selected by the Boers ran in a semi-circle from the Modder River across the Kimberley road, and ended to the east in a rocky eminence, known as Magersfontein Hill, which rose abruptly from the plain on the boundary of the Orange Free State. It was well chosen, for the open country in front afforded no cover, and Cronje's 9,000 men were adroitly posted at the foot of the hills in trenches which were invisible at a slight distance, and could therefore be relied on to afford protection against the much dreaded artillery fire of the enemy. In the meantime the arrival of the expected reinforcements had raised the British numbers to 11,000 men, and by December 9 Methuen deemed himself ready to carry the position by a direct frontal attack. Accordingly on December 9 and 10 a heavy fire was opened on the Magersfontein heights by the naval guns and three batteries of artillery, and the infantry advanced by degrees towards the enemy's position, the General himself taking up a post of observation on a low eminence which was called Headquarters Hill. As the enemy's trenches were not seen, and the cavalry had made no adequate reconnaissance, the gun-fire was directed against the summits of the heights, which a hail of lyddite shells blasted into powder, whilst the Boers waited in the security of their invisible trenches. Methuen, however, supposing that the enemy must have been severely shaken

by the cannonade, determined to advance under cover of darkness, and attack the Boer centre at dawn on the morrow. 1899.

The actual assault was to be made by the Highland Brigade, which was to approach the Boer position during the night, and storm it by daylight. Its right flank was to be covered by the mounted infantry and cavalry; Major-General Pole-Carew with the ninth brigade had already been thrown forward on the left; and the Guards and the Gordon Highlanders were to act respectively as the immediate and the general reserves. Punctually at 12.30 A.M. on the 11th, General Wauchope's Scottish battalions, the Black Watch, the Seaforth Highlanders, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and the Highland Light Infantry, fell in and moved forward. As Methuen had forbidden fires to be lighted, lest the position of the troops should become known to the enemy, nothing but uncooked rations had been served out to the men; and heavy rain was falling, presently succeeded by a terrific thunderstorm. At four o'clock, as the outline of Magersfontein began to grow visible in the dawning light, Wauchope gave the order to form for attack. Scarcely had he done so when a hot fire was opened from the Boer trenches, then only a quarter of a mile distant from the leading companies. With the unconcern of a man to whom fear was unknown, Wauchope advanced to the head of his battalions, and finding the fire growing hotter, gave the order to charge. All semblance of order had been lost in the confusion of the surprise, and it was only "a motley heap . . . of the stoutest-hearted men" who responded to the command. They were within 150 yards of the Boer trenches when Wauchope and the two officers by his side were hit and fell.

In the meantime the guns had come into action, and all along the line attempts were made to rush the Boer position. But they were spasmodic and unsupported efforts, foredoomed to failure. A portion of the High-

1899. land Brigade had carved a gap on the enemy's left; and small parties led by subalterns and sergeants hurled themselves into it; but they were checked by the shrapnel of their own guns. A like misfortune befell a small detachment on the extreme right, which was attempting to work round onto the Boer rear, and had already fallen upon Cronje's Staff. The cavalry also was hampered by wire fencing; nor did Pole-Carew's instructions permit of any effectual diversion being made by the ninth brigade. Inauspiciously for the British as the battle had opened, however, the weak Boer detachments in the half-finished trenches had grown extremely unsteady, and a vigorous and persistent attack might yet have decided the issue of the day. But no such idea occurred to the mind of the General, and a feeling of despair began rapidly to gain ground among the fatigued and hungry men of the Highland Brigade, who had been exposed since dawn to a searching fire and to a pitiless, broiling sun. Towards 1.30 P.M. a party of Boers crept round onto the right flank of the Highlanders, separating them from the Guards who had been advanced to their support, and the officer in command decided to fall back upon his guns. For a time the Brigade retired slowly and in order, despite the musketry fire directed upon it; but ere long the Boer guns opened fire, well-aimed shells began to burst close at hand, "and the brigade streamed away, completely disorganised, to the rear of Headquarters Hill." The battle of Magersfontein was lost, having narrowly missed being a great success. The General's plan had been skilfully prepared, and the troops had shown a fine spirit under a trying ordeal: with a little more tenacity in attack, and with greater concentration of strength, victory might well have graced their arms.

In Natal meanwhile six weeks had passed since White had been shut up in Ladysmith, and subsequent events in that Colony had afforded scanty en-

couragement to the British. Strong Boer divisions had crossed the Tugela early in November, and by the 22nd of that month the troops which had been hastened eastwards to relieve White were in part surrounded under General Hildyard at Estcourt, and in part overshadowed by superior force on the Mooi River. It was a situation which demanded the presence of the Commander-in-Chief, and Sir Redvers Buller, who had reached Cape Town on the last day of October, now went on to Durban, to superintend in person the relief of Ladysmith. His arrival produced a beneficial effect; the Estcourt troops were freed by the withdrawal of the Boers behind the Tugela, and there were 16,000 men in General Clery's camp at Chieveley when Buller entered it on December 5. Amongst the enemy also changes of leadership had taken place: before Ladysmith General Erasmus and Schalk Burgher had succeeded Joubert, who had been incapacitated by a fall from his horse, and, Lucas Meyer being ill, Louis Botha had assumed command at Colenso. Of the numbers, dispositions, and intentions of the enemy Buller knew little or nothing: like Methuen, he had no maps; reconnaissances were neglected or perfunctorily made; an eminence called Hlangwane Hill, whence the whole Boer position could have been surveyed, was left unoccupied; and preparations went forward on the unverified assumption that the Tugela was held by a weak rear-guard, which would not seriously dispute the passage of the river. 1899.

The General's original design had been to turn the Boer position by sweeping westwards on Potgieter's Drift, whence an easy road led to Ladysmith; but on the evening of December 11 this plan was suddenly discarded, probably on account of certain evil tidings which called for a swift and decisive stroke. From the reports received by heliogram from White, Buller concluded that the men of the Ladysmith garrison were growing sick and impatient; the news of Magersfon-

1899. tein had arrived; and he had also learnt that utter defeat had befallen General Gatacre in an attempted
Dec. 9–10. night surprise of Stormberg. In the hope of scoring an immediate success to counteract the effect of these reverses, Buller accordingly determined to carry the Boer position by a frontal attack, to prepare for which the naval guns were brought forward early on the morning of the 13th, and continued during that and the following day a vigorous bombardment of Fort Wylie and the neighbouring hostile positions. As the enemy made no reply and showed none of their men, it was considered possible that they might have abandoned the position; but the neglected point of observation on Hlangwane Hill having now been lost, no certain information could be gathered, and an attack was planned on the assumption that the position was still in fact occupied. The orders were dated 10 P.M., December 14. "The enemy," they said, "is entrenched in the kopjes north of Colenso bridge. . . . It is the intention of the General Officer Commanding to force the passage of the Tugela to-morrow."

Dec. 15. About four o'clock on the morning of the 15th the British commenced their advance, Hildyard, Barton, and the mounted troops under Dundonald making for Colenso and Hlangwane Hill, while Hart and the 1st Royal Dragoons moved down the Doornkop Spruit on the left, and Lyttelton followed as a reserve. Daylight came about three-quarters of an hour later, and the six naval guns on Shooter's Hill then renewing their cannonade, the heights beyond Colenso were again enveloped in the smoke of bursting shells. The visible effects of this fire, coupled with the silence of the enemy, revived the impression, which the events of the preceding days had created, that the position was already evacuated; and Colonel Long, commanding the artillery, began to fear that he would be disappointed in his hope of adding at Colenso to the honours which his batteries had won by their energy at Omdurman. He

therefore trotted briskly forward and unlimbered about 1899.
600 yards from the river in a position entirely destitute of cover, leaving the bullock-drawn naval guns far behind, and Hildyard still further to the rear. This was the moment for which the Boers had been craftily waiting. Botha had 6,000 men beyond the Tugela, but he had not shown one of them for the last few days. When Long unlimbered within 1,200 yards of him, however, he gave the signal for action, and a tremendous fire of bullets and shrapnel burst upon the ill-starred batteries. Five officers and thirty-four men were killed and wounded; considerable confusion arose; the available ammunition soon ran short; and at seven o'clock the guns were forsaken and the men withdrawn.

Long's effort had been premature, but his guns were in no danger of capture so long as the naval guns remained in action; and when the infantry should advance, it might still be possible for them to render valuable service. The General, however, was of a different opinion. He had appreciated the risk the batteries would run if brought into action too hastily; he had therefore expressly cautioned Long against precipitancy; and he now took an exceedingly pessimistic view of the result likely to attend the neglect of his orders. He accordingly went in person to the spot, ignoring with the consummate bravery which always characterised him the many perils of the position; and under his orders gallant but futile attempts were made to rescue the abandoned guns. To the depressing effect of this misfortune other failures presently contributed. Hart's Brigade had been led astray by a Kaffir guide, with the result that it had been suddenly exposed in a narrow defile to a heavy fire at short range. On the extreme right Dundonald had found a Boer force as large as his own, skilfully posted on Hlangwane Hill in a position which defied attack. Hildyard had, indeed, occupied Colenso, but he could not venture to advance unsupported to the storming of the bridge. In a

1899. word, the expected triumph over a weak enemy had been changed into an arduous advance against a strong force, easily capable of foiling every attack; and by 11 A.M. it had become clear to the General that he must devote his energies to the delicate business of retreat. This was successfully accomplished, and when the Boers crossed the river in the afternoon to gather the fruits of their victory, they captured, besides the ten abandoned guns, only a few men who had been unable or unwilling to retire. The Boers were immensely relieved by the turn which events had taken, for they were satisfied that their position must have been carried, had the British simply held their ground during the heat of the day and resumed the offensive under cover of night.

Four considerable reverses had thus befallen our armies in the first three months of the contest, and a feeling akin to despair had arisen in England, where an entire misapprehension concerning the strength and fighting qualities of the enemy had at first induced a confident hope of quick and easy victory. Public opinion began urgently to demand a substantial addition to the armies in the field and the appointment of a new Commander-in-Chief; and in deference to its requirements the despatch of reinforcements was put in hand, whilst Field-Marshal Lord Roberts was ordered to South Africa to assume the supreme command. In the course of a long career in India, where he had served with distinction in the Mutiny and had ended the Afghan War of 1878–1880 by a prompt march from Cabul and a decisive victory at Candahar, the new Commander-in-Chief had won a high reputation for courage, rapidity, and resolution, and for a love of his men qualified by a General's knowledge that the blood of soldiers must sometimes be expended lavishly on the field of battle. Moreover, he was accompanied by Major-General Lord Kitchener as Chief of the Staff, an officer well known as the vanquisher of the wild

savages who had fought under the Mahdist flag at Omdurman. The situation which confronted these Generals when they landed at Cape Town on January 10, 1900, was not quite so black as it had been painted in the imagination of despondent England. Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Kimberley had not, indeed, been relieved, but they were in no danger of immediate capture: at Mafeking the energetic garrison had long since made itself secure against assault, and at Kimberley the effect of the bombardment had been so trifling that "one had to look very carefully in order to find any trace of it." Buller and Methuen had, indeed, been repulsed, but they had by no means been destroyed, and the armies under their command were still capable of engaging the attention of large numbers of the enemy. Moreover, it was reasonable to suppose that the new commanders would profit by the experience of their predecessors and by the mistakes of the enemy: and it was certain that, whether the new troops from England were added to Methuen's ranks or were joined to the men under Buller, the new Commander-in-Chief would have the handling of a force much larger than any that had as yet taken the field under a British General; and much larger also than any hostile force that could be brought against it. 1900.

Nor could this numerical superiority have other than a beneficial effect upon future strategical designs. The simplest method of relieving the invested British posts was to threaten the enemy's capitals; and an advance on Bloemfontein and Pretoria through the comparatively open country in the west, where the railway and the bridges were still safely held by the British, presented no especial difficulty to a general with an adequate force at his disposal. Happier than Buller, who had been diverted by the constraining pressure of a Boer irruption into Natal, Roberts found himself at liberty to adopt this course, and thereby to exchange the rugged and broken country on the east, to which

1900. Buller's want of success had been largely due, for a route over the firm and open veldt, through a country which, though dry and hot, enjoyed an exceptionally healthy climate. The troops were secretly and suddenly concentrated at Modder River Camp in the early days of February, and on the 8th Lord Roberts himself arrived. His first object was to secure Kimberley, which he desired to use as a base for his further advance. His design was to turn the Magersfontein position by sweeping eastwards onto the Boer flank and rear, to veil which movement a feint in the Magersfontein direction was carried out by two small detachments, whilst the bulk of the force moved off under sealed orders in the opposite direction, leaving their tents displayed to view in the deserted camps. The actual relief of Kimberley was to be effected by the cavalry division under General French, which advanced accordingly, driving Boer parties before it.

Feb. 15. When French approached Klip Drift, he found that his road was barred by 900 Boers with three guns, who had seized a semi-circle of kopjes extending for a distance of about two and a half miles, broken by a valley which bisected the position. The General's plan, swiftly conceived and suddenly executed, was to break through the enemy's lines by hurling his cavalry into the central valley; and before the Boers had realised what was happening, 6,000 horsemen had dashed through the opening, enveloped in a cloud of dust, and had formed up again a mile to the Boer rear. Of the enemy on the kopjes many fled and the rest were captured; and before evening the British reached Kimberley. The cavalry leader's brilliant tactics had been crowned with a success which staggered even the men who had carried them into execution. "The enterprise appeared to us at first as quite hopeless; we believed that only a few of us would come out of it alive, and had we made a similar attack at Aldershot, we should certainly have all been put out of action, and have been looked upon as idiots."

Unhappily this welcome success was partially counter- 1900.
acted by the consequences of a strange oversight on the part of the British Generals. They had omitted to keep in touch with a considerable Boer force which had hurried away from the line of their advance; and this force, being under the leadership of de Wet, one of the most enterprising and skilful of our opponents, had determined, on finding itself unobserved, to undertake a descent upon the British lines of communication and supply. The supply park of the British army had been left behind at Waterval Drift, and was there guarded by an insufficient escort in an inefficient manner. Suddenly on the morning of February 15, when the drivers were asleep and the animals were grazing, de Wet swept down upon the ground: the animals stampeded, the drivers fled, and the escort, after an ineffectual resistance, was compelled to retire, leaving the entire train in the hands of the enemy. By the expenditure of a few cartridges de Wet thus became possessed of 200,000 rations, of a great quantity of forage and cattle, and of no small part of the general transport which it had cost so much in labour and in money to collect. The disaster entailed grave inconvenience to Generals and to troops, and it seemed likely for a time to disorganise the whole plan of campaign of Lord Roberts's army; but this misfortune was eventually averted by the devoted zeal and energy of the officers of the Army Service Corps. That these men should show themselves capable of repairing the havoc wrought by such a stunning blow was of a piece with the splendid service performed by them throughout this war. They were called upon with a lamentably insufficient staff to furnish transport and supply for huge numbers of men extended over a large theatre of war at a vast distance from home; the difficulties of the country were very great; the railway communication was inadequate; and for a considerable period they were left entirely in the dark as to the intentions of Generals who had formed no stable plans.

1900. Yet their success was complete. "Apart from the short crisis in supply already alluded to, an army has seldom been so well provided under equally difficult conditions as was the British army in the South African war."[1]

When Cronje at Magersfontein had heard of Lord Roberts's advance, he had looked forward complacently to shooting most of the British, and capturing the rest when they ran away. He had, however, become less cheerful on learning the news from Klip Drift on February 15, and that evening he hurriedly summoned a council of war, in which he himself advocated a retreat upon Bloemfontein. The operation was perilous, for he was compelled by the aridity of the country to choose a route which crossed the front of his enemy, and he was hampered by a large baggage train and by numbers of women and children, encumbrances which had been collected during the long inactivity of his force at Magersfontein, and which his men declined to abandon. Even as it was, he almost contrived to slip away unseen through a gap between the British divisions, and it was only when the dust of his column was descried to eastwards on the morning of the 16th that Kitchener took up the pursuit. The Boer rear-guard was overtaken at Drieput, and defended itself most gallantly throughout the day, materially facilitating the retreat of the main column. That night Kitchener summoned other troops to the chase, and from Kimberley there rode forth as many of the cavalry as a fatiguing pursuit of the besiegers had left fit for service. But Cronje was not yet secured, even with cavalry and mounted infantry to watch him, and on the night of the 16th he again slipped away unperceived, and covered a great distance by a vigorous night march. The following morning he halted in the vicinity of Paardeberg, and there remained till noon, at which hour he again advanced to the passage of the Modder

[1] "German Official History" (Eng. Trans.), vol. i. p. 169.

River. To his intense astonishment a vigorous fire was opened on him just as the first cart approached the ford, the indefatigable French having cut him off with a cavalry division which was supposed to be at Kimberley, incapacitated by its exertions. A still more wonderful achievement was the resolute action of these men, who were only 1,000 strong, in holding Cronje's entire force in check throughout the day, so as to enable the infantry to come up. But for them, Cronje would indubitably have escaped. 1900.

As the British forces gathered to the scene, the question arose how best to turn their presence to account. On the one hand, Cronje had clearly prepared for a stubborn resistance, and he was in a position where dried-up watercourses covered with thick undergrowth afforded excellent cover against infantry attack, but whence he must ultimately be dislodged by gun-fire and hunger. On the other hand, the Boers had shown a remarkable aptitude for speedily strengthening a position, and there was reason to fear that delay might bring other Boers to the aid of their entrapped columns. Kitchener accordingly determined upon an immediate attack, in spite of the exhaustion of his troops, who had undergone arduous forced marches, and of the nature of the ground, which would involve an advance for over a mile across flat and open country. Between six and seven o'clock on the morning of the 18th the Feb. British guns opened fire on the Boer laager, to cover the deployment of the attacking battalions; but the assault was not prepared for by any sustained bombardment. The greater part of the morning was consumed in the dangerous business of approaching the enemy. This was accomplished in three independent movements of the ninth division and the Highland Brigade on the south bank and of the nineteenth brigade on the north bank, the advance in each case being made in a long, thin line of skirmishers, unsupported by effective reserves. Proceeding at first by short rushes, and then

1900. by still shorter crawls, the troops made a determined attempt to cross the open plain under a hot fire from an enemy everywhere invisible. The Highland Brigade conducted itself with peculiar gallantry: "the line became thinner and thinner, while the red-brown spots, which it left behind on the grass, became thicker and thicker"; yet it was not till they were within 500 yards of the enemy that the men lay down and replied to the hostile fire. In the middle of the afternoon, when the division on the north bank was still more than 700 yards from the enemy, upon whom its fire had produced no effect, it received an order from Lord Kitchener to rush the Boer position. This order was transmitted by General Colvile to the only fresh troops available, consisting of half a battalion of the 2nd Cornwalls, commanded by Colonel Aldworth. The Cornwalls accordingly advanced by rushes and crawls until within 500 yards of the enemy, being reinforced on the way by the Royal Canadians, who of their own accord joined in the attack. Both battalions then fixed bayonets, and rising simultaneously, charged with the utmost resolution, but only to be shattered to fragments by the deadly Boer fire. In the meantime Colonel Hannay and some of his mounted infantry had likewise been sacrificed in an equally splendid and equally futile charge on another part of the field; and a body of 500 Boers with two guns under de Wet had come up stealthily to Cronje's aid, and had been allowed to occupy an eminence commanding the flank and rear of the attacking force. Darkness was therefore eagerly awaited, and was quickly utilised to withdraw the exhausted troops. They had been fighting for more than twelve hours, and over 1,200 of their number had fallen; but they were not an inch nearer to the enemy, who might still break through during the night, as in fact some hundreds of them did.

When Lord Roberts arrived upon the scene on the morrow of the battle, he decided to rely upon the less

hazardous experiment of bombardment and starvation. 1900.
The gun-fire produced few losses among the hidden enemy, but their position was rendered uncomfortable by scarcity of food and by the stench of putrefying bodies and of bursting lyddite shells. They were also depressed by de Wet's retreat from his hill on the 22nd, and by his failure to regain it on the following day, after being heavily reinforced. On the evening of the 26th the Free State men declared that they would fight no longer, and on the morrow, the anniversary of Majuba, Cronje and his 4,000 men surrendered unconditionally. "Sir," said the British Commander-in-Chief, "you have made a gallant defence."

The disaster which had befallen Cronje exerted a depressing effect upon the Boers, who began forthwith to withdraw their outlying forces and to concentrate for the protection of Bloemfontein against the great army by which it was threatened. That army was prevented from an immediate advance by the condition of the cavalry, and by the difficulties of moving food for thirty or forty thousand men, when they should turn their backs on the Kimberley railway; and a delay of a week ensued before the march was resumed. Nevertheless, the success then attained was rapid and complete. The fate of Cronje was still fresh in the minds of the enemy, and on March 6 a force 6,000 strong fled from Poplar Grove in uncontrollable demoralisation, almost without waiting to be attacked. At Driefontein four days later the Boers had recovered their spirits, and more than 2,000 of them offered from a strong position a stubborn resistance to General Kelly-Kenny's division of under 3,000 men; but they found that the British General neither feared to make a frontal attack, nor blundered in making it. By a sustained combination of gun and rifle fire, by a skilful apportionment of men between the fighting line and the reserves, and by a resolute and united rush when the right moment arrived, Kelly-Kenny succeeded at

1900. Driefontein, not only in routing the enemy, but also in opening to Lord Roberts, without the firing of
March 13. another shot, the gates of Bloemfontein. The success was a fit reward for an act of magnanimous self-sacrifice on the part of the conqueror during the Paardeberg operations. Kelly-Kenny had then found himself superseded by Lord Kitchener, his junior in rank and service; but he had refrained during the actual progress of operations from raising the question of the command. "By putting all personal considerations on one side for the good of the service, at a moment when the situation itself was causing quite enough friction and difficulties," he had displayed "the true greatness of a strong soldierly character."[1]

Lord Roberts's great offensive operation had not only itself been successful, but it had paved the way for further success in another quarter: it had led
Feb. 27. indirectly to the relief of Ladysmith. Buller had doubted after Colenso whether it lay in his power to penetrate the barrier of mountain fortresses so resolutely held against him, and in the fighting done at Spion Kop and elsewhere along the Tugela valley there had been little to restore his confidence. But the pursuit of Cronje and the threat of Lord Roberts's advance produced their effect in Natal, especially upon the Free State troops; and the British at last reached Ladysmith mainly because the Boers on the Tugela did not choose any longer to bar the way. The relief of General White rendered possible the execution of the Commander-in-Chief's next plan, the concentration of all his forces upon the other Boer capital, Pretoria; and as the enemy had less than 30,000 men to oppose to the 240,000 troops with 400 guns which were brought against them, the issue was a foregone conclusion. Moreover, the operation was performed with a rapidity which utterly dismayed the Boers. "In four weeks, inclusive of a ten-days' halt at Kroonstad,

[1] "German Official History" (Eng. Trans.), vol. i. p. 230.

Lord Roberts's Troops . . . covered nearly 320 miles, under great difficulties as regards supplies, in a country which was deficient in water, in roads, and in cultivation, and where the communications with the rear were in a most insecure condition. This was a performance which furnishes a striking and eloquent proof of the energy of the Chief Command and of the devotion and endurance of the Troops, and which must ever remain remarkable in the History of War." [1] 1900.

A great error had, however, been made in the assumption that Boer resistance would terminate with the occupation of their capitals and the formal annexation of their States. The living forces of the Boers still remained unbeaten in the field, and the seizure of a few cities was perfectly ineffectual to subdue a race of half-civilised farmers who had taken up arms to preserve their national existence. The capture of Pretoria was therefore followed by eighteen months of guerilla warfare, often fierce and treacherous, and always harassing and costly. To the fatiguing finish, quite as much as to the unhappy opening, of hostilities may be traced that feeling of dissatisfaction with which the South African War came generally to be regarded at home. Yet England had not acquitted herself discreditably. She had been called upon to provide enormous numbers of troops for service in a distant theatre of war: she had accomplished the task with success, and she had borne the burden with fortitude. She had also learnt that the whole Empire was ready to come forward to her aid, and that her army still possessed its ancient characteristics. It is not for any nation to produce a Marlborough or a Clive in every leader selected for command in the field; but in the British Army in South Africa the searching test of war had revealed in officers and men the enduring presence of those splendid qualities that of old had won the victory on countless well-fought fields. June 5.

[1] "German Official History" (Eng. Trans.), vol. ii. p. 305.

Three centuries and a half have passed since Elizabeth's seamen launched her island kingdom upon its Imperial career, and an Empire that contains four hundred millions of people has become the heritage of Elizabeth's successors. Its citizens will not be the less worthy of their inheritance if they seek to guide their steps by the traditions of England's past. The men who won the Empire believed that the heathen were reserved for their inheritance; but they never forgot that Divine favour, like human rank, entails obligations, besides conferring privileges. The favourite of Heaven did not repine if his Empire and his trade prospered; but he remembered that his title to favour rested, not upon his skill in acquisition, but upon the use he made of riches and of power, upon the readiness of his response to the call of duty, and upon his endeavours that peace and progress, good government and even-handed justice should inhabit his borders, and dwell in the shadow of his flag.

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